A STEM OF MAN: THEORY OF HISTORY IN TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

by

Jerome Jude Perlinski, A.B., A.M.

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COMMITTEE IN CHARGE OF CANDIDACY:

Professor Thomas Patrick Neill,
Chairman and Adviser

Assistant Professor John William Padberg, S.J.

Associate Professor Jose Mariano Sanchez

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the essence of this thesis from which the title is taken:

And the stars are soil
That grew a stem of man
To decide about the bud.

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INTRODUCTION

A double point of view is operative in the pages which follow. Firstly, the work is concerned with the history of ideas. And secondly, it applies--to a limited degree--the teilhardian world-view. Since both the history of ideas and the world-view of Teilhard de Chardin are unfamiliar to many readers, let me indulge in just a few lines on each of these.

Intellectual history, unlike diplomatics, historical sociology, military history and the like, lacks the precision and clear-cut cause-and-effect style which characterizes many other disciplines. Perhaps this is because the history of ideas is itself quite a new field. But I suspect that the reason for its "vagueness" (if so it must be called) is to be found rather in the very nature of intellectual history itself. It seems to me that the history of ideas consists of two principle moments: (a) the discovery and exposition of the *Zeitgeist*, fashion or mode of thought, idea or principle, and (b) the comparison of these with previous or--as here--contemporary thought patterns. No one will doubt that the first step alone is a staggering one, for it involves all the historiographical methodology inherent in historical studies, as well as the "feel" for an age, the living of the period, the "intuition" into what an epoch is all about.

Now contrary to philosophy or the history of philosophy, the history of ideas does not engage simply in deciphering the thought of the principal actors on the stage of history. It is concerned rather with understanding and explaining the makers of intellectual history. The makers are not only philosophers (although philosophers play a great and important role), not only statesmen, not only intellectuals. But they also include the "common man," his literature, his tastes and fads, his likes and dislikes, his apprehensions and dreams. Hence, the specialists will claim that intellectual history is often evasive and imprecise because it fails to reproduce exactly the thought of an individual thinker. But such is not the goal of the history of ideas, which attempts instead to recreate the thought of a period, of groups. Thus, for example, the intellectual historian in discussing the nineteenth century would be only half fulfilling his task if he were to dissect Darwin's theses and leave out the impact the great scientist had upon the man-in-the-street, whose ideas on evolution were quite different from those of the master. Darwinism, then, is a different "idea" from the "idea" of

Darwin--and it is this which is the job of the historian of ideas to explore.

Once having arrived at this level, the curious mind will want to compare. And the intellectual historian tries to see what is common and what is different in the long history of human ideas and ideals. To do this, he must generalize (to the despair of the specialist), he must pass over superficial differences--not because they are unimportant, but because he wants to see an overall view. He uses the details as building blocks, but he is more interested in the entire structure than he is in any one individual stage of its construction. He is then more synthetic than analytic in this stage of his task; he uses the analysis of more conventional historians as the raw material from which he can construct his own edifice.

This synthesizing approach dovetails neatly with the teilhardian world-view which attempts to set up--at long range--a history of the universe, in its fullest dimensions of past, present, and future. To best understand the teilhardian method it is well to forget the analyzing tendencies which characterise most of our mental operations. It would be well to forget being a cartesian for the reading of these pages, and to allow the mind to synthesize and generalize, without fear of losing one's footing on a substantial, concrete base.

Now obviously these statements come out of a more general set of presuppositions which must necessarily be delineated: (1) Originally this work was to have been a revalorization of the philosophy of history by means of decoding such a philosophy in the work of Teilhard de Chardin. It soon became apparent, however, that the words "philosophy of history" stand for something far wider than they have traditionally been taken to mean. This is, the history of the philosophy of history shows that we are dealing with the history of world-views, idea-systems, Weltanschauungen--whatever the name--whole complexes of ideas and emotions which define and structure man's answers to several basic questions. Thus history, as a "scientific discipline" fades into one tool among many in the act of creating a unifying world-view.

2. There is a gap between the present world-views (metahistories) and reality; that is, no single idea-system of which we are the inheritors can adequately provide a productive outlook attuned to our own contemporary reality. Current basic theory is not in line with present fact and the needs of the future in order to provide the dynamism for meaningful, decisive, and creative action. Hence, the problem of action

(underlying which is the gap between fact and value) which today is not only far too risky to remain unresolved, but which has reached crisis proportions.

3. While the teilhardian vision may not be the panacea for all problems nor the most integrated and satisfying of all proposed theories of psychosocial evolution (indeed it is really only one of the first), it does attempt a basic orientation and an instance of a real effort in bridging this gap between present theory and action for the future.

4. If some historians can shift the tremendous weight of historical learning in the direction of meaningful problem-solving for the future, it will mean a decisive change in the direction of those for whom history provides the fund of knowledge on how to act and react in human situations. Indeed, one of the problems in current history education is the lack of interest, the disdain for the past by twentieth-century generations. The reasons for this are many, but one of the most important of them is the fact that historians themselves are not realistically oriented. That is, bound by the traditional frames of references (and this rather unconsciously for the most part) which were created in a fixist universe, they cannot effectively bring their knowledge to bear on current problems, let alone the

problems of the future.

5. Thus we are facing the ridiculous spectacle of each generation believing it must start out from Adam and Eve; whereas if history has any lesson to teach, it is that we stand on the shoulders of our ancestors. Obviously this is belief in progress in evolution and its meaning. One of the tasks of history is to specify the future. In general, history is a perspective, a way of looking at things.

6. Finally, those who deny or reject the religious experience in its validity, while attempting to project a theory of psychosocial evolution are, I believe, truncating their response. This is why the theories of Teilhard de Chardin can be more humanly satisfying, even though they do not tie up in a neat package all the problems which such a synthesis necessarily spawns. In fact, no such neat package exists. But this does not mean that we do not attempt to impose order and unity. Life is thus truly becoming, never simply being. The unity we search is the ideal. Because we do not possess it now, nor even in our lifetime, does not mean that we give up the search for it.

The work falls naturally into two parts. The first deals with the history of the philosophies of history: an exposition of the evolutionary neohumanist world-view; a sketch of the principal stages in the history of idea-systems; a comparison of these stages and a delineation of common problems. The second part is devoted to the teilhardian response to the questions raised in the first section: a discussion of the teilhardian method; an exposition of Teilhard's view on the relation between man and nature, man and other men, man and God; a comparative study of Teilhard's views and the historically appearing idea-systems.

CHAPTER I

NOTES FOR A NEW AGE

No matter how one faces the situation, the contemporary human portrait is always the same. On the one side the prometheans: dissatisfied, impatient, searching, destroying and building; ecstatic with newly found power; enraptured by the vision of enormous possibilities. And on the other, the nostalgic: dissatisfied, impatient, searching; sober and perhaps a little fearful of power; charmed by the golden age which passed them by. And in the middle, the sceptics and cynics: dissatisfied, drawn not to the past but only to a future foreseen and well-controlled; seduced by the dream of scientific impartiality. What is common in these three views which divide the men of our time is obvious; they are the views of dissatisfied men. They differ only in their method of approach; the one being passionately attracted toward the future, the other toward the past, and the third toward a future completely constructed and developed by themselves.

None of us knows for certain the image we are supposed to project. Some of us are convinced that we really ought to look one way and not another, but we do not know how to find this "way." And some think that it really does not matter in the end. And some think there is no end at all. And some ask why there are questions about ends in the first place. Thus we find no respite in running after each other in search for some surety, some certainty, a bit of satisfaction.

We ought not indulge any cartesian delusions of placing ourselves beyond, above, or below the common lot of mankind. No one of us can say we do not feel (although some to a greater degree) the "vertigo of fragility, of instability." And if we are part of our times, if we partake of the spirit and soul of our age, we too share in the general disaffection, no matter in which direction we choose to try our fortune in escaping it. But just as a transcending or condescending attitude would be unrealistic, so a shrug of the shoulders, an indifference would be equally as ruinous. We can no more hope to escape the surging thrust of modern life without risking drastic deformation than we could risk a nuclear war with the hope of creating a once-for-all political equilibrium (although who could deny that there are many who valiantly attempt such a life _en arrière_ and who entertain the vain dream of peace through coercion?). No; if we intend to construct what can be a workable basis for a full human life we ought to plunge deep down into the living stream and grapple with the free currents attempting to toss us onto either bank; we ought somehow to build the raft that can bear us onward with at least a minimum of aimless or backward drifting.

But where to find the materials for this ideal construction? To whom can we turn? One response seems the simplest and most facile of all: If we are dogged by frustration and wish to dissolve our anxiety, we can turn to the blueprints we already have, for the total patterns of several millenia of civilization must somewhere contain the materials. After all, the Golden Ages of mankind--whether the Athens of Pericles, the Pax Romana or the Roman Republic, the thirteenth century, or the eighteenth--these ages were masterpieces of human achievement, the apogees, the epochs when "things were better" than they are now.

Indeed, such a response is very attractive and not at all silly. It is not unreasonable to believe that with great effort we humans can extricate ourselves from the depths to which we have sunk in order to reach again a summit not unlike those of the past. In theory we can, and some are, easily tempted by such a pleasant dream. But problems arise immediately; we awaken from our reveries and view contemporary facts. How, for instance, does one reconstruct an Athenian democracy in a state of two hundred millions or, for that matter, of fifty millions? And how does one maintain a united "Christendom" in a world where not only are christians a minority, but a fast fading one at that? And does one teach finesse and gentlemanliness over the television waves to be used when greeting friends on the 6:27 suburban express? Attractive as the theory of reconstruction on the blueprints of the past may be, it presents what seems to be insuperable obstacles; barriers so great, in fact, that we turn to another solution.

Again, the contrary resolution of our anxiety requires no great intellectual effort. We have perhaps merely to jettison all the baggage of the past and begin anew, unencumbered by useless accoutrements which can and do hinder us from rapid and real advances. But here too even a rapid glance shows the innate weakness of this solution. Just how does one erase the effects of several thousand years of accumulated wisdom, responses, and personal and social reactions and decisions? Where and how to find the tabula rasa, the page blank enough to accept a completely new handwriting? And even were we to find such ideal emptiness, with what would we fill it? Where would we obtain the ingredients?

Are we then reduced to the sceptic position?

Can we do no better than we are doing now--a step or two forward, a step or two backward; progress during one age, regress during another? The generations go on as best they can, making do with traditional assumptions, a few new ideas thrown in by chance. Yet the sceptic attitude, stoic as it may be, does not lessen the frustration; and, no more than the other two solutions, does it help in deciding how to live.

Thus, "man himself has always been his own best vexing problem," reflected Niebuhr.[1] And none the less today. The situation seems hopeless. We appear to be trapped in our own disabilities, so that in whichever direction we turn, we are confronted with simply a lesser degree of pain, never with the loss of anxiety and the abolition of suffering which is, in fine, that which man wishes to obtain.[2]

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[1] Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man, A Christian Interpretation (New York: Scribner, 1947), p. 1. A glossary of terms is appended for the reader's use.

[2] The christian school, of course, denies this quest for the complete nullification of evil. Man's finite condition demands a response in faith: the prayer for redemption. Cf. more specifically the analysis of christian thought in chap. ii below.

The Need for an Idea-System

Increasing numbers of the disaffected are turning to a relatively new school of thought: contemporary neo-humanism, for it represents what is often regarded as the most advanced intellectual position of modern man. A distinctly twentieth-century contribution to the history of human thought, its adherents share their roots with those who have called themselves humanists throughout the ages. Nevertheless, today's neo-humanists are much aware that theirs is a new method, or, at the least, a new emphasis on some long forgotten principles, principles put into question because of the collapse of an old world-view no longer viable in a society in full transformation. As Julian Huxley, the new humanism's principal spokesman, points out: "The present uneasy age of disillusion after two Great Wars has witnessed a widespread breakdown of traditional beliefs, but also a growing realisation that a purely materialistic outlook cannot provide an adequate basis for human life."[3]

The neo-humanists believe that humanity ought to have a world-view. Rather than rejoice in the death of great idea-systems, they lament their demise. Thus,

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[3] Julian Huxley, "The Humanist Frame," in Julian Huxley (ed.), The Humanist Frame (London: Allen & Unwin, 1961). Hereafter cited as THF.

Dennis Gabor: "It is a sad thought indeed that our civilisation has not produced a new vision, which could guide us onto the new Golden Age which has now become physically possible, but only physically."[4] Indeed, one of the major principles of the new humanism is the belief that

> it is the general idea-system, the ideological pattern of ideas and knowledge, values and beliefs, which essentially characterises human societies and cultures, and indeed is the prime determinism of their social organisation, their material substructure and their achievements. The psychosocial process is a unitary one, simultaneously and indissolubly both material and mental, in which the material machinery and the social structure are constantly reaching back on the ideological pattern. But mind dominates the process, and it is the ideological pattern which is primary.[5]

If the old pattern of ideas and beliefs has not already been radically discredited, the fact remains that we have reached a threshold, a critical revolution of our general thought patterns. The situation is a precarious one, for when the grandeur of a civilization is only seen by a vanishing fraction, it is not a very safe civilization.[6]

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[4] Dennis Gabor, cited by Patrick Meredith, "The Frame of Humanist Communication," THF, p. 261.

[5] Julian Huxley, Essays of a Humanist (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 119.

[6] Dennis Gabor, Inventing the Future (New York: Knopf, 1966), p. 161.

As the historical events of the twentieth century were busy destroying whatever confidence was left to man, there occurred a fantastic explosion of knowledge. This was not merely a deepening of what humanity at large already possessed, but also a veritable convulsion in the very quantity of what men knew: new knowledge about every conceivable aspect of reality--art, religion, the mind; the material content and structure of the universe in all its phases; society, history. In the domain of the natural and exact sciences alone, UNESCO reports that some two and a half to three million articles appear in the fifty to sixty thousand periodicals of the world each year![7] Incomplete, startling, often sketchy and only directive, groping, crude, as well as sophisticated--the new knowledge is all of that. But much of it is unused, unassimilated, unintegrated so as to manifest its relevance to human life. As a result, much knowledge is misapplied and misdirected. The upshot is clear: the new knowledge must be organized into a new general idea-system, unless we are to lose the advantages it can bring us in a real human advance.[8]

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[7] United Nations, UNESCO, Qu'est-ce que l'Unesco? (Paris, 1966), p. 20.

[8] Cf. J. Huxley, "The Humanist Frame," THF, pp. 13-14; Essays of a Humanist, pp. 506, 121. Cf. also Lewis Mumford, The Transformation of Man (New York: Harper & Row, 1956), p. 189: "Thus far, even the

But a new world-view can never be built unless what C. P. Snow has called "the Two Cultures" can be somehow harmonized.[9] The two cultures, that of the scientist and that of the humanist, now rest in the state of mutual exclusion. After the battles waged by one against the other, a kind of diffident isolation is maintained by the scientists' resistance to humanists and the humanists' resistance to the men of science. All of which results in a triumph for scepticism, whose adherents have already long ago spoken well and even convincingly for their own position.[10] Thus the paradox: no new idea-system while the humanist-scientist split perdures; no healing of the schism without a new idea-system.

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mightiest of civilizations have lived only an impoverished, half-awakened life; only a fraction of their populations had a chance to develop beyond their narrow animal role; and even their favored elite stumbled and halted long before they had reached their conceivable natural limits. As a further handicap, the great civilizations were but islands, cut off in space from their immediate neighbors, and even more seriously cut off in time both from the riches of their own past and that of the rest of mankind."

[9] C. P. Snow, The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1961); The Two Cultures and a Second Look (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1965).

[10] Gabor, Inventing the Future, p. 11: "Thus the case for scepticism and even pessimism regarding the Golden Age was clearly and completely stated about thirty years ago in the utopias of Orwell, Wells, Huxley. It has not been answered to this day."

The new humanism, however, is not stumped by the problem. Its followers take the advice, offered by an English statesman, to use large-scale maps, "as a preservation against alarms, panics and general misunderstanding of the true relations between nations." This counsel, Alfred North Whitehead believes, can be equally valid for the humanist: "In the same way in dealing with the clash between permanent elements of human nature, it is well to map our history on a large scale, and to disengage ourselves from our immediate absorption in the present conflicts."[11] The change has to be in our mental as well as our physical boundaries.[12] If a new idea-system can somehow be worked out, using the new knowledge offered by both scientists and humanists, perhaps the crucial dilemma can be solved; perhaps a meaning to man's life may be found. In fact, believe the neo-humanists, there is no more urgent task than the creation of such a new universal outlook.[13]

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[11] Alfred North Whitehead, Science and the Modern World (New York: New American Library, 1964), p. 162.

[12] Lionel Elvin, "An Education for Humanity," THF, p. 276.

[13] Julius Thomas Fraser (ed.), The Voices of Time (New York: G. Braziller, 1966). S. G. F. Brandon, "Time and the Destiny of Man," ibid., p. 157: "For Western thinkers there can be no more urgent task than that of resolving this dilemma [an atheistic scientific world with instinctive christian providence], and if

The Discovery of Duration

Perhaps the most important fact contributing to the rise of twentieth-century neo-humanism is the discovery of Time, or more properly, of Duration. And more specifically again, of Evolution. No attempt is made here to give a complete and thorough history of the concept of Evolution or of the philosophical or psychological ramifications of the concepts of Time and Duration.[14] But we might simply emphasize with Huxley, that "Evolution--or, to spell it out, the idea of evolutionary process--is the most powerful and the most comprehensive idea that has ever arisen on earth."[15] So powerful is

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possible, of producing an adequate philosophy of history, that is, of the meaning of man's life in time, in both its individual and its communal extensions." Hereafter cited as Voices.

[14] The reader is referred to: Robert T. Francoeur, Perspectives in Evolution (New York: Helicon, 1965), pp. 9-142; Theodosius Dobzhansky, Mankind Evolving (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962); Loren Eisley, Darwin's Century Evolution and the Men Who Discovered It (New York: Doubleday, 1958); Philip G. Fothergill, Evolution and Christians (London: Longmans, 1961); Historical Aspects of Organic Evolution (London: Hollis and Carter, 1952); Bentley Glass, Owsie Tenchin, and William Sharr, Forerunners of Darwin: 1745-1858 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959); Julian Huxley, Evolution, the Modern Synthesis (New York: Harper, 1943); Noel Korn and Harry Reese Smith, Human Evolution (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1959); Georges Paulet, Studies in Human Time (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956); Sol Tax (ed.), Evolution after Darwin (3 vols.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); Scientific American, September, 1960.

[15] Huxley, Essays of a Humanist, p. 125.

it that it has swept away every other conceptual system into irrelevancy and oblivion. Yet there is still a good deal of ambiguity surrounding the notions of duration and evolution, especially in the United States, where opposition to the concept lasted well into the twentieth century,[16] and where the popular press served but to confuse the public rather than to clarify the basic issues.

What is evolution? Simply stated, evolution means that everything in reality is born, has a history. That what is real did not appear instantaneously, but that reality is a process, an on-going development, a movement rather than a position, change rather than stability.[17] Evolution says that the universe is in time, that it cannot escape time, that in fact it never was outside of time, and that if we would begin to understand what the cosmos means we must begin to understand it in its relation to time. The fundamental discovery of evolution we owe to Charles Darwin, admitting, of course, that he was able to build on the countless savants who went before him. Nevertheless, he is rightly considered the "Newton of biology" for just as his great English predecessor of the seventeenth century, Darwin changed the patterns of human thought. It was he who "rendered evolution inescapable as a fact, comprehensible as a process, all-embracing as a concept."[18]

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[16] Who could forget the notorious Tennessee Scopes trial. In that state, a law prohibiting the teaching of evolution in the public schools was abrogated only in May, 1967, and such laws still exist in the states of Arkansas and Mississippi.

[17] Claude Tresmontant, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, His Thought (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1953), p. 18: "Evolution in its full sense--that is, extended to the whole of reality--means that reality did not appear at one stroke, instantly, as it were. On the contrary, reality is engaged in progressively inventing itself, a process which has been going on for several billion years." Cf. Teilhard de Chardin, "Réflexions sur l'Ultra-Humain": "the expression of the structural law (at one and the same time the law of both 'being' and knowledge) by virtue of which nothing, absolutely nothing . . . . would be able to enter our life and field of vision save by way of birth, which, in other words, is a synonym for the 'universal temporal-spatial

In order to understand the meaning and underlying significance of evolution, we can take a closer look at the idea of time itself. It was Mumford who described the clock and not the steam engine as the key

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interconnection' of phenomena," The definition of evolution agreed upon at the centennial symposium of Darwin's discovery at the University of Chicago: "Evolution is definable in general terms as a one-way irreversble process in time, which during its course generates novelty, diversity, and higher levels of organization. It operates in all sectors of the phenomenal universe but it has been most fully described and analyzed in the biological sector." (All translations from French into English, unless otherwise cited, are by the author.)

[18] Huxley, Essays of a Humanist, p. 9.

machine of the modern age.[19] Guided by the clock, man was able to rationalize the unequal natural rhythms of life which surrounded him. He was able to separate into instants, minutes, hours, and days, the past, the present, and the future; and thus he was enabled to build modern industrial society, founded upon the idea of spatialized time. This idea, given its philosophical basis by Descartes and its scientific foundation and justification by Newton who established the laws of mechanics and thereby seemingly showed how the universe "works," was indirectly challenged by Darwin's discovery of evolution. If evolution were to be accepted, then one would have to admit that the clock is merely an instrument for rational measure, and that in itself it does not and cannot express the veritable relationship of things in time.

Philosophically, it was left to Henri Bergson (1859-1941) to discuss what has now become the contemporary notion of reality in time, that is, duration. In L'évolution créatrice,[20] Bergson sought to specify the words "to exist." "I am," Bergson asserts, "first aware that I change from state to state." He continues,

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[19] Lewis Mumford, The Human Prospect, ed. Harry T. Moore and Karl W. Deutsch (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p. 5.

[20] Henri Bergson, L'évolution créatrice (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1948).

> I am hot or cold, happy or sad. But to speak thus is to believe that each of my states of being form a single block; it seems to insinuate that I really breathe in the spaces between the changes. But if we look further, I can easily see that there is no "time," no instant in which I do not change, discontinuity in the psychological life is only apparent. Each psychological state is but the best lighted point of a moving zone which encompasses all that we feel, think, will; in short, all we are at a given moment.[21]

Now it is precisely this entire zone which constitutes our actual situation. Even if we wish to suppose that there is somewhere an "I," untouched by change, a colorless, immobile substrata, we are obliged to admit that it would be an artificial construction by which we recall or become aware of the various "states" of change in which we find ourselves.[22] In fact, our duration is not one instant which replaces another. "Duration is the continual progress of the past which gnaws at the future, inflating itself in moving ahead."[23]

The notion of duration gives a radical twist to the idea of simple, spatial time. The removal of the spatial aura which encapsulized time and the acceptance rather of a "pure" time or duration creates the paradoxical statements in which we find the past and future somehow participating in the present. Thus, "in order for something to endure, the past cannot be merely 'past,' but in an important sense must still remain to be rediscovered, must, in other words, somehow remain 'present.'"[24] The essence of duration is that the future and the past are within the present. Evidently, the same could not be said for time conceived as a succession of present moments. It remained for Whitehead to reunite the idea of time and space in an unique and acceptable way, so that he could eventually assert:

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[21] Ibid., p. 3. [22] Ibid., p. 4. [23] Ibid.

> In a certain sense, everything is everywhere at all times. For every location involves an aspect of itself in every other location. Thus every spatio-temporal standpoint mirrors the world.[25]

Nowhere did the reality of duration seem more evident than in the close examination of living forms, and Darwin and his successors formulated the elements of such biological evolution. During the last two or three decades of the nineteenth century the idea was taken up and applied or misapplied to every area of life. At the turn of the century, there was a pause so as to absorb more fully the implications and the methodology.[26] /But by 1959, at the centennial of the

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[24] Friedrich Kummel, "Time as Succession and the Problem of Duration," Voices, p. 39.

[25] Whitehead, p. 87.

[26] Cf. ibid., p. 101.

University of Chicago, Sir Julian Huxley could explain, with none to contradict him,

> This centennial celebration is one of the first occasions on which it has been frankly faced that all aspects of reality are subject to evolution, from atoms and stars to fish and flowers, to human societies and values--indeed that all reality is a single process of evolution. And ours is the first period in which we have acquired sufficient knowledge to begin to see the outline of this vast process as a whole.[27]

In short, there is no longer any doubt that the most characteristic note of the universe in which we live is its dynamism, the fact that it was born and has a past which counts. Now it is precisely this quality of the cosmos, that is, the fact of cosmogenesis (the cosmos-in-process-of-being-born), that calls forth twentieth-century neo-humanism. For if the universe can be understood only as a process, it can be understood only by its history. "To wish to understand the world is to wish to understand a history."[28] The humanists are convinced--as all biological and other scientific evidence shows--that it is man who finds himself at the topmost rung of the ladder of evolution, as the latest and surely the most perfect development in the evolutionary process. Furthermore, man is now in a position --precisely because of his awareness of his own capacities and the enormous quantity of knowledge he has at hand--to be responsible for the whole future of the evolutionary process on this planet.[29] The result is clearly the belief in the urgent need of a whole new world outlook built upon this basic faith in evolution.

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[27] Huxley, "The Humanist Frame," THF, p. 15.

[28] N. M. Wildiers, Teilhard de Chardin (Paris: Editions universitaires, 1961), p. 25: "The light of contemporary science forbids us to doubt for a single moment that the universe in which we live possesses a quality not at all static, but rather eminently dynamic. The result of this is that whoever poses the question of a sense to the world ultimately points the question of the marriage of history. To wish to understand the world is to wish to understand history. Just as a static man does not reveal to us the entire reality of the human fact, a world conceived as immobile does not yield its most profound reality."

Such is the why of twentieth-century neo-humanism: the breakdown of former world views in the face of modern historical facts and the knowledge explosion; the vast amount of new knowledge available, but misapplied, abused, and often wasted; the concept of evolution which merely waits to be utilized as a guide for new human directions. Thus, in a certain sense, modern humanism is nothing more than the extension of Renaissance humanism which ushered in a long period of optimism and freshness. In the twentieth century, after much disillusionment, fear, and anxiety, Western man became very much like medieval man whose future meant doomsday and whose present seemed but a prelude for even more dire things to come. With the neo-humanists, the future seems a wondrous land again, not at all the animal farm of Orwell or the "New World" of Mumford. The neo-humanist can even repeat with Tennyson:

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[29] Huxley, Essays of a Humanist, p. 121: "Man is not merely the latest dominant type produced by evolution, but its sole active agent on earth. His destiny is to be responsible for the whole future of the evolutionary process. His duty is to try to understand it and the mechanisms of its working, and at the same time direct and steer it in the right direction and along the best possible course."

> Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
> With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;
> When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;
> When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed:
> When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see:
> Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.[30]

How to Build an Idea-System

The humanists are not content with merely stating the case for a new world view. Far from bemoaning the fact that something must be done, they have also programmed a method for building their idea-system. The method is a rather simple one based directly on the facts presented by contemporary society and aspiring to fulfill the needs created by the yawning gap between man's real possibilities and the present inadequate methods for actualizing them.

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[30] Alfred Lord Tennyson, "Locksley Hall," The Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1892), p. 95.

The modern humanist program finds its underpinnings precisely in the contemporary discovery of duration. Père Wildiers summarizes: "We do not differ from our ancestors so much because we know more things, but rather because we have discovered time and thus we have learned to see everything in a new perspective."[31] The new world vision is basically an evolutionary vision.[32]

This evolutionary perspective on the world is to be developed and transmitted through the education process, the belief in which forms a principal pillar in the neo-humanist edifice. We need but listen again to Julian Huxley:

> For me, education is an organ of man in society, whose basic function is to ensure the continuity and further advance of the evolutionary process on earth by the transmission and transformation of tradition. It exists in rudimentary form in higher vertebrates, but only becomes of major importance in our own species, where it transmits the knowledge,

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[31] Wildiers, p. 26.

[32] Fraser, Voices, p. xx: ". . . the idea of time [may] be used to hold together separate areas of knowledge in the face of the fragmentation brought about by two major causes. One cause is the immense increase of available data and analytical information in the sciences. The other is the diverse experimentation in methods of thought and modes of expression in our age of profound social change.

> the skills and beliefs, the attitudes and ideas which are necessary for the maintenance, achievement and development of man in society.[33]

Education underlies every attempt, indeed every other belief of the evolutionary neo-humanists. What is instinct in subhuman biological forms becomes conscious methods for the transmission of tradition. But education does not serve merely as the medium by which the new evolutionary faith can be communicated to younger generations. Education itself is a means by which this very faith is created. For the world of education suffers as much as every other area of human endeavor from contemporary knowledge fragmentation. Education must be used, but it must also be reworked, refashioned according to the facts and needs of current society.[34] Patrick Meredith, for example, suggests a return, or rather, a reinvigoration of the idea of isomorphism, that is, the understanding of two different concepts (which are really structurally identical) by a single effort of understanding.[35] Education can then be used both for the creation and for the transmission of the idea-system.

How this might work out in practice is

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[33] Huxley, Essays of a Humanist, pp. 116-17.

[34] Ibid., p. 120.

[35] Patrick Meredith, "The Frame of Humanist Communication," THF, p. 263.

theoretically described by a number of contemporary humanists. Michael Tippet suggests that it is through music that an educative mode can be found to forge "a unified expressive medium."[36] Others, like Lionel Elvin, would base the new educative process about history.[37] This "new history" would be organically linked with the life-processes which evolved prior to man and would continue its investigations in the direction of the future, not merely to guess, but to attempt to provide (and thereby actually already construct) some answers and working bases for a unified humanity.[38] And still another approach is taken by those who espouse a complete reformulation of religious concepts. In the religious educative process, each traditional concept must be analysed, the realistic basic discovered, the new factors admitted, and new forms constructed which will be more relevant to the present situation.[39]

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[36] Michael Tippett, "Towards the Condition of Music," THF, p. 219.

[37] Lionel Elvin, "An Education for Humanity," THF, p. 279: "What the young need to know as soon as they pass from the earliest years of childhood is what they are, what mankind is, and how mankind fits into the universe around us. The leading idea here should surely be the continuing story of humanity, continuing back into the past through the history of evolution of life to the story of the evolution of the universe, and continuing forward towards the idea of one humanity conscious of its unity and of its collective responsibility for life on this planet."

[38] Ibid., p. 269: "It is still difficult to think of human civilization without thinking of a series of particular civilizations each in its own time and place. Up to the stage of recorded history we now tend to see man as a simple evolving species, but we are only just reaching the point where we can see civilized man in comprehensive and unified terms. This is because civilizations until now have necessarily been local."

All of these approaches are a part of something larger which Huxley calls "Mind Exploration,"[40] the investigation of the inner world of man, which ought to rival and even surpass space exploration. What is, for example, the underlying essence of the mystic vision?

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[39] Huxley, "The Humanist Frame," THF, p. 45: "Reformulation--even reappraisal--is perhaps most necessary in regard to man's inner life and what, for want of a better terminology, is called spiritual development." Whitehead, p. 169: "In the first place for over two centuries religion has been on the defensive and on a weak defensive. The period has been one of unprecedented intellectual progress. In this way a series of novel situations have been produced for thought. Each such occasion has found the religious unprepared. Something, which has been proclaimed to be vital, has finally, after struggle, distress, and anathema, been modified and otherwise interpreted. The next generation of religious apologists then congratulates the religious world on the deeper insight which has been gained. The result of the continual repetition of this undignified retreat, during many generations, has at last almost entirely destroyed the intellectual authority of religious thinkers. Consider this contrast: when Darwin or Einstein proclaims theories which modify our ideas, it is a triumph for science. We do not go about saying that there is another defeat for science, because its old ideas have been abandoned. We know that another step of scientific insight has been gained. Religion will not regain its old power until it can face change in the same spirit as does science."

[40] Huxley, "The Humanist Frame," THF, p. 46.

What do we really know about the experience of love as lived every day by millions of men and women, and the love of a Saint Teresa, a Saint Francis, a Shelly, or a Hitler? If Freud only began to adventure into our inner selves, how much further we have to go, what wonders we can and ought to uncover and put to perhaps dramatic uses!

Briefly, the evolutionary neo-humanist conceives of education itself as this process of discovery, this desire for research, this quest after new knowledge and the practical application of the vast quantities of knowledge already at our disposal. He is without predisposition as to the final results. He knows that the world is evolutionary in structure; he knows that the general instrument of this process is now man, and now blind, uncontrolled forces. He knows he has, or at least believes he has, enough knowledge to begin the new construction and he is extremely and acutely aware of the need for it.

> The next step must be for the scientific method to be brought into the core of the psychosocial sphere. Man must take a scientific look at his values, at his ethics, at his art and aesthetics, at his social and economic organization, and at his religion. Above all, it is necessary to take a scientific look at the historical process in general, as we have successfully begun to do with the general process of biological evolution. Insofar as we succeed in this new scientific venture, we shall be able to construct the framework for a new, open-ended, and

> much more comprehensive pattern or system of ideas, capable of expansion and application in many new fields.[41]

The Principles of Neo-Humanism

If until now modern humanism would seem vague and utopian, even brash and naive, or perhaps simply "too good to be true," it is because we have not specified sufficiently its underlying principles and presuppositions.

The contemporary evolutionary faith, far from being blind and uncomprehending, is situated as we have seen on a broad base of scientific fact which would be difficult to deny. It is thus a rational faith in the developing processes of the cosmos, and most significantly to man. Faith in man, faith in the capabilities of man to forge the future--because of the very banal, but often overlooked and underestimated reality, that man stands at the head of the cosmos--at once the product and the producer of evolution. The neo-humanist movement becomes a fundamental and radical reaffirmation of the worth of man, even after the historical onslaughts of a half-century of the degradations of war, totalitarianism, and submission to the machine; even after what some thought was the successful overthrow of man-as-center by the triple revolution of Galileo, Newton, and Darwin and the philosophical attacks of the existentialists.

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[41] Huxley, Essays of a Humanist, p. 52.

The evolutionary neo-humanist affirms, however, not merely that man is at the head and center of the cosmos, but that man, and only man, is in a position to control the future of this universe: "This is the conviction that nature can be commanded only by those who understand her design."[42]

It is clear that modern humanism goes a step beyond the humanism of the Renaissance. Surely, we find that same exuberance, the same Faustian spirit, the same belief in the importance of man. But there are significant differences. The contemporary humanism lacks the disdain and contempt for the past which so characterized men like Rabelais, for example. The Renaissance men were conscious rebels--against medieval scholasticism, emerging rationalism, Old Testament Protestantism, gothic art, architecture and literature. They were men who knew what they were *against*, but were not quite clear what they were for. The Renaissance humanist is a man who "clings, or seeks to cling, to the notion that man is not wholly a part of nature, that he is not just the cleverest of animals, *but actually not wholly* an animal. . . . To oversimplify, his slogan might be: Neither superhuman (theism) nor subhuman (mechanism)."[43] In short, although the Renaissance humanists adventured into new and unexplored areas of knowledge, although they held man as the standard, they were not at heart very sure of themselves or of man's place in the universe.

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[42] J. Bronowski, "Science Is Human," *THF*, p. 88.

On the contrary, contemporary humanists are quite certain of man's place in the universe. Perhaps having learned the lesson of the Renaissance, namely, that humanist insecurity was the cause of eventual defeat by reformation fideism and cartesian rationalism, they take a strong stand. Not only do they accept the "Be-yourself" of classical humanism, as well as the "Transcend-yourself" of Renaissance humanism, but they take a third step, "Transform-yourself."[44]

The transcendence of man beyond himself is to be accomplished by the conquest of nature, a conquest which can be carried on only by those who understand the patterns and designs of nature. Such a principle is founded on two further beliefs. One is that the human mind can know nature: that in some way nature is accessible to the human mental capacity. In this sense, we can say that nature follows laws, laws which can be discovered, explained and understood by human reason. This is nothing new to Western man. But the second belief is far more significant; that is, that nature is a coherent unity. In other words, evolutionary humanism is, at root, a monism.[45]

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[43] Crane Brinton, The Shaping of Modern Thought (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 44.

[44] Mumford, The Transformation of Man, p. 222.

It is true that common sense seems to support dualism rather than monism. Everywhere we look about us we see duality: man-woman, life-death, happiness-sadness, day-night, heat-cold. It is just a short distance from these everyday perceptions to body-soul, nature-supernature, matter-mind, material-spiritual. That distance was traversed early by the Greek philosophers and followed out through Aquinas, Descartes, even up to the existentialists.[46] But it is a further step to see the inherent unity in the universe, to affirm that behind, below, or beyond the seeming dualism of the cosmos, there lies a profound and unequivocal unity. This was the step taken by the mystics as well as by the philosophers of the idealist school--strands of thought never exerting a dominant influence on the Western pattern.

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[45] Cf. Bronowski, p. 88.

[46] Cf. Russell Brain, "Body, Brain, Mind and Soul," THF, p. 51.

Now to say that the cosmos is a unity is to imply that mind is inherent even in the primal stuff of the universe, that mind is somehow there "from the beginning." This is not to say that mind is matter or vice versa. It is simply to say that seen under one aspect, the primal stuff is matter; from another, mind: that mind and body are a unity and not two separate entities, that death itself is an aspect of life. The monism of evolutionary humanism does not obliterate distinctions. It rather accentuates their essential unity, affirms their liaisons and attributes their separations more to accidental appearances than to reality _au fond_.[47]

Once the basic unity of the universe is recognized, the humanism can proceed to affirm other basic beliefs. One of these is the dynamic condition of the universe. Everything changes, everything develops, everything moves. Thus C. A. Waddington asserts, "Any mode of thought which attempts to attribute to man or any other organism any form of unchanging essence, or any character that is conceived as _being_ rather than _becoming_, flies in the face of our whole understanding of biology."[48] Wherever one formerly said "being," the modern humanist corrects it as "becoming." So conscious is he of the fact of evolution, of duration, that he can no longer conceive of the universe in static or fixist terms. The old Greek or Hebraic views of the world, and even the Newtonian vision are not only unbelievable but incomprehensible in the face of known scientific facts.

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[47] _Ibid._, pp. 59-60.

[48] C. R. Waddington, "The Human Animal," _THF_, p. 69.

The acceptance of the fundamental unity of the universe as well as its dynamic character seems harmless enough until the neo-humanists affirm that the same principles apply also to man himself. This assertion is unsettling, for no longer can man be accepted as the stable center in a changing, restless universe. The humanist asserts that man too is restless, unachieved, incomplete, a truncated triangle, passing his life in an attempt to complete the peak. Man is presented, indeed, as the example par excellence of biological becoming, of universal unrest, the living contradiction of things stable and unmoving.[49]

Yet there is a direction to the _élan_. And this direction is toward tomorrow, toward the future; it is progressist.[50] The movement of the universe is not haphazard, a series of trials and errors finishing up nowhere in particular because not really attempting to go anywhere in particular. Biology teaches the progression of "lower" forms into "higher" forms; it witnesses a definite rank among living organisms, from the less conscious to the more conscious, or from the less highly organized to the more highly organized. At the head of this procession of changing, adapting forms stands man the most highly conscious, as well as the most highly complex organism in the universe. But the evolutionary process need hardly stop at man. Human evolution, human history is indeed the prolongation of biological evolution: another level reached, different forms appearing, but still all a part of the grand unity which is the cosmos in way of completion.

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[49] Wildiers, p. 58: "Man is a being who searches and is ambitious, an uneasy being. The past does not manifest itself to us as a static and immobile landscape, where all would be assigned their fixed and definitive positions, but on the contrary, as a battle, with its ups and downs, with its violent outbursts and ephemeral powers for a vaguely felt ideal of the greatest human perfection."

There are two important consequences which flow immediately from these basic principles of evolutionary humanism, one touching the meaning of the absolute, the other the meaning of history. First concerning the absolute. For the evolutionary humanist, "absolute" is an invention of the mind. The idea of a world "beyond" our own, of supernatural inhabitants characterized by absolute being, flies in the face of everyone of the established beliefs of the humanist faith. The division of reality into natural and supernatural is the very contradiction of the belief in one universe. Such an idea acts merely as a retard to a full understanding of what the cosmos actually is, and impedes us from realizing its essential unity. Furthermore, the belief in an absolute reality, a sphere where nothing changes, where all remains stable and fixed, denies the evidence supplied to us in reality. Everything points to continuing movement. A belief in absolutes hinders progress for it creates an obstacle in the very path of progress with its assertion that progress is truly impossible in this world of nonmoving things, persons, or ideas. "To sum up," says Huxley,

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[50] John Cohen, "Subjective Time," Voices, pp. 257-75.

> any belief in supernatural creators, rulers, or influencers of natural or human progress introduces an irreparable split into the universe, and prevents us from grasping its real unity. Any belief in Absolutes, whether the absolute validity of moral commandments, of authority of revelation, of inner certitude, or of divine inspiration, erects a formidable barrier against progress and the possibility of improvement, moral, rational or religious. And the all-too-frequent combination of the two constitutes a grave brake on human advance, and by obfuscating all the major problems of existence, prevents the attainment of a full and comprehensive vision of human destiny.[51]

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[51] Huxley, "The Humanist Frame," THF, p. 40. Cf. H. J. Blackman, "The Human Programme," THF, p. 131. It will be necessary to return to the idea of the

The Philosophy of History of Evolutionary Humanism

Nothing is more natural for the new humanist than to affirm the unity of histories. For if the universe is a unity, then all those beings which participate in this reality are somehow one with another. And if this unity is dynamic, so is the reality of every being. That is, every being has a history which is in some way the history of reality itself. There is only one history, the history of the cosmos.

The neo-humanists have various ways of describing the unity of history, all of which taken together, express a certain dynamic base for a new idea-system. Herman Muller, for example, sees the history of life as divided into three great periods. The first is a preparatory stage whose direction was determined by simple natural selection. Indeed, it is the longest phase, for nature could move only by groping, by endless attempts at trial and error, by many failures and fragile successes. However, nature succeeded in giving birth to the human form, the beginning of the second stage, our own, rather short and transitional epoch. Here it is

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absolute and the supernatural, for, as we will see, although the evolutionary neo-humanist rejects what he considers to be traditional supernaturalism, he affirms at the same time a spiritual life.

not the environment which shapes life and the human form, but the contrary. During this period, man learns to take control of his environment, shaping, twisting, grasping, rending it to his own specifications and requirements, even to his own whims. He learns not to be the plaything of nature, but to make nature itself his own toy. Gradually the universe submits to the demands of the human form, ushering in the third phase, still to come. Here, the history of life "will reach down into the secret places of the great universe of its own nature, and by aid of its every-growing intelligence and cooperation, shape itself into an increasingly sublime creation. . . ."[52]

Such a philosophy of history is obviously founded on the recognition that human history and biological evolution are inexplicably intertwined. Human history is the prolongation of biological evolution. And so, it is to the biologist that we can confidently look to give us again the sense of history. Because the biologist has the "long view" in mind, because he sees the whole history of the universe as a continuum, and not as three separate units (material, vital, human), he has the necessary qualifications to "prophesy." That is, he can tell us in which direction evolution will move in order to realise its promise. The biologists, finally, assert over and against certain philosophies and historical theories, that there is a sense to the movement of the universe, a sense which can and often does escape those who cannot see the forest for the trees.[53]

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[52] Herman J. Muller, Out of the Night, cited by Gabor, Inventing the Future, p. 198.

One of the most interesting descriptions of the connection between the purely animal and the human is given by Lewis Mumford in his The Transformation of

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[53] Paul Chauchard, L'être humain selon Teilhard de Chardin (Paris: Gabalda, 1959), pp. 42-43: "History will thus appear as the prolongation of biological evolution, permitting man to take on all his dimensions to realize all his possibilities. Without leaving his own domain, the biologist, because he stands at the necessary distance, can thus arbitrate the quarrels relative to the existence of the meaning of history. He can without ceasing to be objective 'prophesy'; not that he knows what will really happen--this depends on contingencies and human freedom; but what ought to happen if evolution pursues its normal course and realizes its promise. The spirit of evolution shows scientifically the error of those who profess the absurdity of a world where such a process is in course. . . . The sense of evolution only appears to him who compares the value of animal series and cerebral complexification to the divine epoch, even as the meaning of history often escapes the historian drowned in the vicissitudes of little historical facts." The same ideas are often expressed in a variety of ways, e.g., Dobzansky, p. 108: "The appearance of man inaugurated a third kind of history, the history of culture, super-imposed upon cosmic and upon biological evolutionary histories." The precise formulation of these theories is of little importance, for in the end their prime assertion is that of the continuity in the universe, the unity of the dynamic process. Gabor, for example, asserts that when man will have reached what he calls the third stage, history (in the traditional sense) will have come to an end and the era of 'post-historic' man will begin." Cf. also Gabor, Inventing the Future, p. 168.

Man.[54] Mumford describes the slowly gathering forces of purpose and direction in the long aeons before man's appearance: the universe "making up its mind." In fact, if we look backward, "something that may later be identified as life and mind perhaps is present at every stage of the cosmic process." It was "out of this cosmic web of life" that stepped man: "the creature that dared consciously to be a creator, and that found another path to creation than that of biological metamorphosis."[55] The continuity is clear. Man is different, he does represent a new stage in cosmic development; but he arises out of the same "stuff" as all of the universe.

At the same time, neo-humanists believe that cultural history, human history, the story of archaic and postarchaic man--whatever name we wish to give it--this history is not simply reducible to biological history. The great difference lies precisely in the adjectives. What makes human history different from biological evolution is that human history is not directed or controlled by biology, but by humans themselves. In other words, biological evolution is the substrate out of which human history becomes possible. With the arrival of archaic man, evolution turns a corner, adopts new methods. No longer merely the blind gropings of molecular change, chemical and biological reactions and transformations; now the directions of human evolution lie in the minds and in the hands of humans themselves. At one and the same time, human history shares in the common development of the universe, but it also stands above and ahead of this development, for with the coming of man into the picture of the cosmos, controlled direction makes its appearance under a rational form.[56]

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[54] Cf. p. 21. [55] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

The comprehension of this idea, which is nothing more than an expression of progress in human history, is made possible by the understanding of irreversibility of time.[57] The meaning of duration is, quite simply, that every action, every event is unrepeatable. The vocation of humankind is to supersede the actions of his predecessors, to modify what has been handed to him--whether this be merely the work of millenia of chemical and biological interactions out of which arises his own human capabilities, or the ages of cultural heritage upon which he can build, add new values, and outline new directions. It may be argued that this is not the case, that man does not think according to the scale of history. But history proves that they do so. Man is aware that history has a direction, and that this direction is of his own making. Man can never fully escape from his biological origins; even though we have come a long way from archaic man, we are still engaged in transforming the basic fabric which we have inherited. It is this effort which prohibits even the most repetitive movements of history from being entirely without meaning. For, in fact, "the making of the future is an essential part of man's self-revelation."[58]

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[56] Dobzhansky, pp. 118-19.

[57] Cf. Piet Smulders, S.J., The Design of Teilhard de Chardin: An Essay in Theological Reflection (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1967), p. 118. Cf. also Walter J. Ong, S.J., In the Human Grain, Further Explorations of Contemporary Culture (New York: Macmillan Co., 1967), pp. 11 ff.

What has been said of the neo-humanist philosophy of history can be summarized in a series of affirmations: History is the continuation of the human plane of the same dynamic unified movement (evolution) which is the very meaning of the cosmos. On the human level, evolution (history) takes a direction which is progressive and is recognized as such; that is, it attempts to transcend past efforts to fulfill or complete the design of evolution. In a word, history is human (directive, controlled) evolutionary progress.

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[58] Mumford, The Transformation of Man, p. 221.

Now it is precisely at this point that the two corollaries we have just considered have their meeting place. For it will be clear to every thoughtful reader that while the rejection of absolutes and the belief in the rational control of evolution from the moment the human form makes its appearance are logically happy conclusions in the series of neo-humanist principles, they do present a very real problem. By what set of criteria is progress to be made? In former idea-systems, the criteria of human advance were supplied by supernatural revelations and the rational explanation of these. Ethics was built upon theologies, aided by the philosophical speculations of scholars of all ages. A "natural law" was discovered, and these imperatives, "impressed on the human heart,"[59] were expanded and explained by historical examples, rational deduction and common consent. If men were to progress, they ought to do such and such. Certain forms of actions were abolished, or prohibited, because they were "against" the natural law. In the christian (and other religious traditions), the natural law was considered at the base of human action. But because the natural law was difficult to get at, a good God supplied further directives, explicated those which were darkened because of an original fall from grace, and provided divine sanction which dictates for all time whether man may perform this action or not, indulge this desire or not.

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[59] Cf. Pius XII, Humani Generis.

However, while those in the traditional system may be dismayed by what seems to be a rejection of ethical order and the replacement of complete subjectivism, the evolutionary humanists have managed to create a foundation for ethics, based on evolution itself. Thus Spender: "The immorality of the actors on the stage of history consists in their becoming the landmarks along a journey which has rendered them completely anachronistic."[60] Evolution is its own sanction. If one does not move in the direction pointed out by the evolutionary process, he is threatened to become an anachronism. The rule of life is to cooperate with the onward, progressive movement of the cosmic process. Thus, the criteria for a new "scientific" ethic will be evolutionary criteria, based upon man's knowledge of the past and present, and guiding and directing him toward a future of his own creation. If my action is in agreement with open development and further progress in the historical movement, it is a good or "moral" action. If my action in some way impedes progress, it is "evil" or immoral. Thus, "in this light the highest and most sacred duty of man is seen as the proper utilisation of the untapped resources of human beings."[61]

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[60] Spender, "Social Purpose and Integrity of the Artists," THF, p. 232.

Nevertheless, Donzhansky poses another, more serious, problem to the scientific ethician. "Suppose," he queries, "that further studies of human biology and evolution tell us exactly what the direction of evolution in general, and of human evolution in particular has been." This is, suppose we remove the relative basis of the scientific ethic, and discover that there is some sort of absolute meaning, absolute direction toward which evolution is moving.

> Just why should we take for granted that this direction, which we have not chosen, is good? . . . Despite any exhortations to the contrary, man will not permanently deny himself the right to question the wisdom of anything, including the wisdom of his evolutionary direction.[62]

Two answers could be given to this criticism of scientific ethics. The first would consider it as actually missing the point of the whole system of the evolutionary sanction. For even if man were to suppose that the direction he has ultimately discovered in the evolutionary process were wrong or undesirable, the very meaning of human evolution (human history of progress) is that he has the freedom, indeed the responsibility, to change this direction. In other words, Dobzhansky simply raises the stakes a step higher in the game of progress. Whereas before man acted in the hope of harmonizing with the evolutionary movement, were he to have definite knowledge of cosmic direction, he would still have to act on a risk, that is, he would have to trust his own abilities to control cosmic direction. Which amounts to the second answer more poetically proposed by Aldous Huxley in Brave New World Revisited:

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[61] Huxley, cited by Dobzhansky, p. 127.

[62] Dobzhansky, p. 129.

> Human beings are a good deal less rational and innately just than the optimists of the eighteenth century supposed. [That is, Dobzhansky is right in supposing man's freedom to do what he wishes even in the face of the most obvious and stubborn facts. But] On the other hand, they are neither so morally blind nor so hopelessly unreasonable as the pessimists of the twentieth century would have us believe. In spite of the Id and the Unconscious, in spite of endemic neurosis and the prevalence of low IQ's, most men and women are probably decent enough and sensible enough to be trusted with the direction of their own destinies.[63]

And, as a group, he might add, with the destiny of the cosmos itself.

Thus the question becomes one of whether or not we believe that humanity can be trusted with its own future. For it is not ours to decide whether the future is ours to make or not. The question is rather: The future belongs to humanity--what are we going to do with it? It is too late to debate whether we wish to accept the responsibility; it has already been laid upon our shoulders (or, more optimistically, handed to us as a gift) from the moment that archaic man first became aware that he knew. The single question is whether or not we will understand and act in accordance with this responsibility. We can therefore conclude, as Darwin did in The Descent of Man, ". . . we are not here concerned with hopes or fears, only with the truth as far as our reason permits us to discover it."[64] Thus human destiny is no longer merely an affair of hopes and fears. Once greater being is recognized as man's ultimate aim, a science of human potential to help guide the long course of psychosocial evolution that lies ahead will become more and more necessary.[65]

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[63] Aldous Huxley, Brave New World Revisited (London: Chatto & Windus, 1959), p. 49.

But the scientific ethic of neo-humanism is not as cold and super-rational as it may at first seem. Nor does it deny the reality of a spiritual world.[66] In part, evolutionary humanism itself has risen in contradiction to a rational materialism in which there is no room for the human phenomena of beauty, love, and unity. There is a true concern for a method of escape from mechanical uniformity toward an interpretation of human values and human life,[67] for more human liberty and transcendence of the self,[68] for a life wherein reason and the mystic sense combine in a happy harmony.[69]

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[64] Charles Darwin, The Descent of Man, cited by J. Huxley, Essays of a Humanist, p. 34.

[65] J. Huxley, Essays of a Humanist, p. 34.

[66] Santayana, cited by J. Huxley, "The Humanist Frame," THF, p. 48: "There is only one world, the natural world, and only one truth about it; but this world

Although the neo-humanists are essentially optimists, they realize that in a world where spiritual values are at best undernourished and bypassed or at worst unrecognized or denied, it would be hopeless to

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has a spiritual life in it, which looks not to another world but to the beauty and perfection that this world suggests, approaches and misses."

[67] Mumford, Transformation of Man, p. 185: ". . . I do not conceive that the means for bringing about unity lie, willy-nilly, in the further development of mechanical collectives on a planetary scale. One of the positive incentives toward bringing about world unity, indeed, is the necessity for finding alternatives to an integration based on mechanical uniformity."

[68] J. Huxley, Essays of a Humanist, p. 247: "We want more sense of participation in something enduring and worthwhile, some embracing project, as against a competitive rat-race. Whether with the Russians or our neighbors on the next street. In the most general terms we want more transcendence of self in the fruitful development of personality: and we want more human dignity not only as against human degradation, but as against more self-imprisonment in the human ego or more escapism."

[69] Aldous Huxley, "Human Potentialities," THF, p. 426.

expect even a minimal degree of human potentiality to be realized. And they do not hesitate to apply a solution as old as archaic man, as traditional and ingrained as the most conservative of religious systems, and yet so new that it may startle those who have forgotten it.

> That we shall perish unless we learn to love more warmly than we do at present is only too obvious. . . . Love is as necessary for human survival and growth as are bread on the physical and knowledge on the symbolic level. Buddhism, Christianity, and modern science are in full agreement on this point.[70]

The Humanist Portrait

The evolutionary humanist then is, first, a person for whom the world makes sense. It must make sense so that he can continue to move and live in the world, so that he does not lose all taste for progress even in his own personal life.[71] The universe is far from a chaos, contracting or expanding upon itself for no reason, man oscillating between its extreme powers, the plaything of savage and chance forces. Nor does the universe move in meaningless circles, repeating again and again the same successes as well as the same failures.

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[70] *Ibid.*, p. 428. The most eminent exponent of the necessity for love and its renewal in human life is Erich Fromm, especially in *Art of Loving* (New York: Harper, 1956). Cf. also Ignace Lepp, *The Authentic Morality* (New York: Macmillan, 1965); and *Psychology of Loving* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1963).

[71] Cf. Gabor, *Inventing the Future*, p. 187.

The world has meaning because the contemporary humanist believes he sees things as they are. At least he wants to see things as they are and devotes most of his life in this endeavor. Perhaps he may spend his every effort in simply finding out how to know. But that he does know and can know, of this he is certain. His knowledge is oriented and, in a way, even controlled by his desire to live better, or rather, to live more. He is as everyone else taken up by a complete idea-system, concerned always with the ultimate questions, because he knows that his answers to these will direct the way he lives.[72] He believes that after he has been able to catch a glimpse of how the world is, he must give a "total response, at once scientific and imaginative and in a sense also moral."[73] To do this, he must not create a unity out of the universe, but recognize the unity which already exists. His world-view is a synthesis of the three aspects of human life: scientific, imaginative, and moral.

The humanist looks to nature as the most profound source of knowledge. He believes that nature can reveal to him the secret of the unity in the universe.

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[72] Cf. J. Huxley, "The Humanist Frame," THF, p. 17.

[73] Elvin, "An Education for Humanity," THF, p. 277.

He believes that he himself is an integral part of that nature, not something beyond and unrelated to it, nor even something related to it in origin but henceforth an epiphenomenon. Unlike the humanists of early modern times, he situates himself _in_ the universe along with the rest of reality, allowing himself no extended parts, no areas of himself which lie outside of the universe, untouched by its changing patterns and its evolutionary processes.

The neo-humanist is not afraid to create a new world-view. He believes that a succession of idea-systems is as natural a phenomenon in the human sphere as the succession of increasingly complex phyla are in the biological sphere. He does not fear if his new _Weltanschauung_ appears difficult or different, dramatic, delicate, or dreamy. His concern is that it be based on the facts of nature, as he is able to grasp them with all the capabilities of his own human mind and the mind of his collaborators.

But he does fear if his vision becomes deleterious. In fact, however, he is ultimately convinced that it is the philosophies of history which his replaces which are noxious. He repeats the warning of Aldous Huxley,

> "Free as a bird," we say, and envy the winged creatures for their power of unrestricted movement in all the three dimensions. But, alas, we forget the dodo. Any bird that has learned how to grab up a good living without being compelled to use its wings will soon renounce the privilege of flight and remain forever grounded. Something analogous is true of human beings.[74]

He believes it has been the old world-views which have clipped the wings of men, which have helped to slowly extinguish the spark of promethean fire, left to him after centuries of expansion and discovery. In his belief that man can know the universe and that in knowing it he can begin to control it for his own destiny, he does battle to convince others that this, and nothing less, is really the fully human task. He becomes an apostle for unity, for synthesis. Whatever hinders the unity of the universe, that he opposes. Whatever promotes its progress, that he praises and aids. His loyalty is to his family and to humanity, with nothing in between that is of any great importance.[75] He is aware that he is a part of a greater community, that anything less than the universe can never be his true home.[76]

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[74] A. Huxley, Brave New World Revisited, p. 162.

[75] Gabor, Inventing the Future, p. 170.

[76] Mumford suggests that the flag of the United Nations should fly in every neighborhood as the reminder of belonging to a greater community (The Transformation of Man, p. 199).

The humanist is convinced that the present views of a supernatural world are inadequate, do not "fit" our present time.[77] He sees them as contrary to the unity in the universe. It is man, and no outside power beyond man, other than those natural powers which he has not yet learned to tame, who controls the release of change and the patterns of movement.

> The evolutionary humanist is the person who is capable of breaking through the boundaries of culture and history, which have so far limited human growth. A person not indelibly marked by the tatooings of his tribe or restricted by the taboos of his totem: not sewed up for life in the stiff clothes of his cast and calling or encased in vocational armor he cannot remove even when it endangers his life. A person not kept by his religious dietary restrictions from sharing spiritual food that other men have found nourishing; and finally, not prevented by his ideological spectacles from ever getting more than a glimpse of the world as it shows itself to man with other ideological spectacles, or as it discloses itself to those who may, with increasing frequency, be able without glasses to achieve normal vision.[78]

This on the negative side. On the positive side, the new world vision of the evolutionary humanist attempts to demonstrate man's place in the world, man's destiny. It attempts to take advantage of all the knowledge at its disposal to create this new vision which

> is both comprehensive and unitary. It integrates the fantastic diversity of the world into a single

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[77] Elvin, p. 279.

[78] J. Huxley, Essays of a Humanist, p. 218.

> framework, the pattern of all-embracing evolutionary process. In this unitary vision, all kinds of splits and dualisms are healed. The entire cosmos is made out of one and the same world-stuff, operated by the same energy as we ourselves. "Mind" and "matter" appear as two aspects of our unitary mind-bodies. There is no separate supernatural realm: all phenomena are part of one natural process of evolution. There is no basic cleavage between science and religion; they are both organs of evolving humanity. . . . .
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> . . . .
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> The upshot is clear. Man is not merely the latest dominant type produced by evolution, but its sole active agent on earth. His destiny is to be responsible for the whole future of the evolutionary process on this planet. Whatever he does will affect that process.[79]

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[79] *Ibid.*, p. 121.

CHAPTER II

THE TRIUMPH OF TIME

In New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art hands the sixteenth-century painting of Pieter Brüghel entitled "The Triumph of Time." It pictures anthropomorphised time as Chronos devouring his child. Surrounding him are time's ageless symbols: a serpent biting its tail (endless cycles of time); the sun and moon drawing a ceaselessly moving chariot in which is the Tree of Life nourished by a globe encircled by the signs of the zodiac. The chariot's wheels are mandala (signs of wholeness) which as they pass crush men's tools and devices. The procession closes with a cherubim announcing the end of time and the beginning of a new era, or the Last Judgment.

Brüghel was attempting to describe a truth which becomes apparent to anyone who seriously studies the history of philosophy or the philosophies of history. Not only does time triumph over man's individual physical and metaphysical life, but time also manages to triumph over man's intellectual life, becoming one of the central problems with which the greatest intellects of all ages have had to grapple.

I have attempted to show in the preceding chapter that modern thinkers, too, are attempting to come to grips with the problem of time, especially as represented in the facts of evolution. They have discovered that Father Chronos certainly has ruled the appearance and the existence of all species and institutions. Nevertheless, it would certainly not only be naive but also untrue to believe that time and its processes were never or only inadequately treated in former world-views. As I have already suggested, the idea of the domination of time over all reality has indeed been the central core of the world-views of the past. Once the question: What is man, God and the world (nature) in relation to time? is asked, the answer becomes a philosophy of history or philosophy of time or explanation of reality.

The Cyclic School

A survey of the history of the philosophers of history can establish what may be called four schools of thought on man's most fundamental question. First and perhaps most enduring has been the cyclic views, shared by archaic Hindu, Buddhist, classical man and many individuals in our own time.[1]

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[1] Material for this chapter was gathered from the following principal source works: Mircea Eliade, Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return (New York:

Archaic man

In illo tempore, or some such phrase, best summarizes archaic man's thought on history and time. "At that time," that is, in the Golden Age, when man did not suffer, when he was not bound to undergo the vicissitudes of change, when he lived in a paradise of simplicity and naivete, "at that time," that is the archetypal epoch. Archaic man had, of course, no experience of this paradisiac universe, but he was only too aware of the cosmos in which he found himself. It was a cosmos in constant change, a cosmos where nothing remained stable except change itself, in its ever repeating cycles. Thus, no view of the world was a more adequate reflection of reality than the cyclic view. There is nothing new under the sun; man cannot escape the constantly renewed rhythms of cycles which are time's triumph.

Harper & Row Torchbook, 1958); Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism (London: Sheed & Ward, 1961); Myth and Reality (New York: Harper & Row, 1963); Patterns in Comparative Religion, trans. Rosemary Sheed (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1965); Grace Cairnes, Philosophies of History (New York: Citadel Press, 1962); Karl Lowith, Meaning in History (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949); Patrick Gardiner, Theories of History (Glencoe: Free Press, L959); Hans Meyerhoff (ed.), The Philosophy of History in Our Time (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959); William Lucy, History, Method and Interpretation (Worcester: College of the Holy Cross, 1948); Allan Nevins, Gateway to History (New York: Appleton-Century, 1938); Julius T. Fraser (ed.), The Voices of Time (New York: G. Braziller, 1966).

From his first awareness of change, man easily became persuaded that time, and thus history (man's participation in time) moves in cyclic fashion. The transformations in light, from day to night; in the moon, from new to full; in the seasons, spring to autumn, warm to cool, rainy to dry. Physical occurrences like the annual Nile flooding,[2] the movements of the tides, the shedding of leaves--all these proved to archaic man that the world and, in fact, reality itself are caught in a ceaseless pattern of circles.

We are, perhaps, tempted to remark that such a view is neither very appealing nor very dynamic. And such was the response of archaic man as well. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Babylonian epic of some two thousand years before Christ, we can read the story of its hero who sought to escape time's cycles and to win immortality for himself. From the Babylonian Noah who had survived the universal flood, Gilgamesh learns the secret of immortality--a rare plant growing at the bottom of the sea. Having discovered it, he bathes and rests, while a serpent steals the previous plant, eats it, and sheds his skin, a symbol that he, rather than

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[2] Perhaps significant for a modern is the fact that the new Aswan Dam controls, for the first time, what has been this most important natural phenomenon in mankind's history--the flooding of the Nile.

Gilgamesh, had gained immortality. Thus Gilgamesh's escape from time was abortive.[3]

Another example of the application of archaic cyclic theory is the Enuma Elish ("When Above"), the Babylonian creation story whose version which we possess dates from 1500 B.C., but originally dates from as early as 3000 B.C. The story of the dreadful combat between Tiamat and Kingu on the one side and the victorious Marduk and Ea on the other was symbolically reenacted each year.[4] For the archaic mind, the grand battle between the protean gods was the real reality, the reality untouched by time. Its repetition, if for us only symbolic, had a meaning far more important to the Mesopotamians. For the victorious Marduk (the king) made the primeval epoch alive again, bringing meaning and significance to the everyday life of the individual.

Both Gilgamesh and the reenactment of the creation story indicate that archaic man was profoundly aware of his immersion in time. Escape or progress was impossible. All one could do was repeat endlessly the

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[3] Cf. Cairnes, Philosophies of History, pp. 1-2.

[4] Cf. ibid.; also Gerhard Von Rad, Genesis, trans. John Marks (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963); Bruce Vawter, A Path through Genesis (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1956); and Theodore H. Gaster, Thespis, cited in Cairnes, p. 16.

Golden Age stories. The development of the reenactment of the changeless paradise and events which occurred therein was closely related with the mythopoeic nature of archaic man's rapport with the universe. This rapport was of a personal nature, the things of the universe being regarded as having personal wills. If the Nile flooded it was because it "wanted" to. And to move its will, one had ought to offer gifts. So, too, when archaic man became sufficiently aware of the change in seasons and their effects on fertility, sacred marriages, fertility rites, and periods of sexual license developed. Finally, archaic man was able to develop myth-dramas. What occurred on the earthly plane was universalized on the cosmic plane as myth. The annual reenactment of the myth linked the microcosmic world to the universal macrocosmic universe. The king became the organic link between the two levels and it was his task to perform on the microcosmic level what the god or gods had accomplished on the mythic level. But all were aware that it was the gods who controlled destiny, that the true reality lay on the universal level and was approached only through certain rites or myth-dramas.

Archaic man then was an antihistorical man. History for him was suffering. History, change, newness, these were to be avoided (even though they are in fact inescapable) at all costs. Newness did not adjust to the reality of cycles, and especially not to the original archetype which alone gave meaning to events here below in time. Real meaning was to be found not in change, but in the liberation from change; a liberation which could not, in fact, ever be achieved. Thus archaic man was doomed to eternal repetition in an attempt to somehow recreate the Golden Age from which he lived in exile in time.

Hindu concepts of time and history

Hindu thought is a sophisticated advance over archaic man's cyclic pessimism. Here, too, man's goal is to escape the laws of time, not to a Golden Age, but to perfect integration or reintegration with the principle of reality. Yogic practices are simply attempts at arriving at such integration. For example, the mandala is nothing more than a device used to aid the yogin in transcending the meaningless forces of this world.[5] The yogin may mentally contemplate such a mandala, or he may draw it on the ground. The purpose of the exercise is to achieve Vajrasattva, the Adi Buddha at the mandala's center. Encircling Vajrasattva are four Buddhas and

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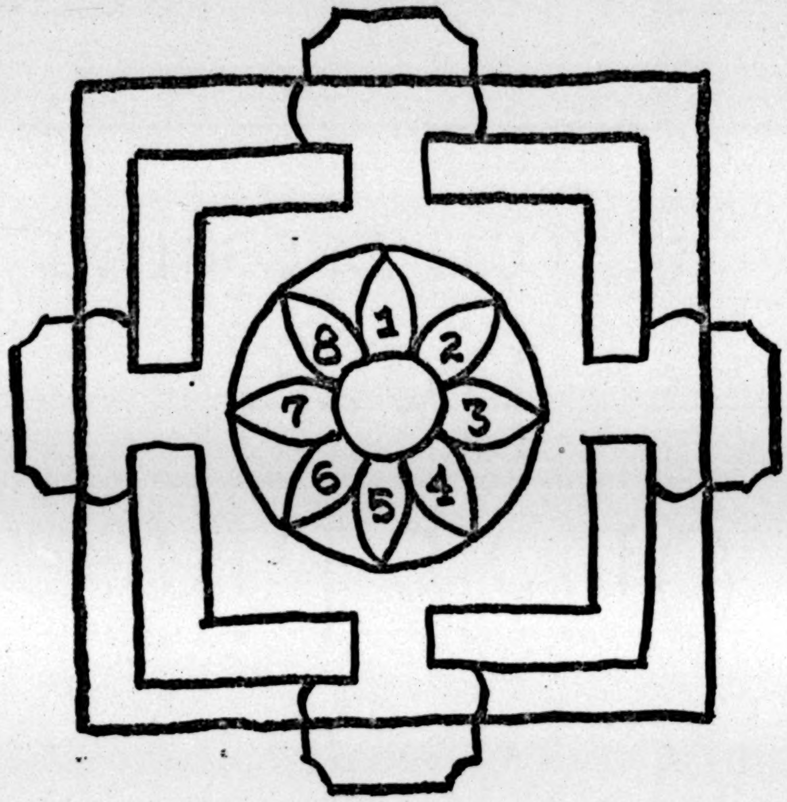
[5] Fig. 1 (Mandala) p. 65, taken from Cairnes, Philosophies of History.



mandala

Figure 1

their female partners, emanating from which is the space-time universe. Each Buddha is characterized by a particular color, psychological quality, sound series, and time, as well as a skandha (one of the five component parts of every individual: body, feelings, perceptions, impulses and emotions, acts of consciousness). Vajrasattva himself, for example, is characterized by the evil quality of wrath, the wisdom quality of revealed knowledge, the skandha of consciousness, the color white, the consonantal series YA, RA, LA, VA; autumn belongs to him as well as the second half of the night (midnight to dawn). He is absolute mind. And so for each Buddha of the mandala. The goddesses represent earth, wrath, passion, and envy.

The mandala is considered a truer representation of reality than anything we can perceive by ourselves. The phenomenal world the yogin experiences from day to day is merely the shakti (female counterpart) of the highest being.[6] But the shakti must, and can be transcended. Buddha himself describes this belief:

> There is an unborn, an unbecome, an unmade, an uncompounded: if there were not, there would not be an escape from the born, the become, the made, the compounded. But because there is an unborn, an

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[6] In Hinduism, Brahman or Vishnu; in Mahayana Buddhism, the Adi-Buddha; in Taoism, the Tao; and in Therevada Buddhism, the Buddha.

> unbecome, an unmade, an uncompounded, therefore there is an escape from the born, the become, the made, and the compounded.[7]

The purpose of human life is to escape from the Wheel of Time to which man has been fastened. It is to try to achieve the unborn and the unbecome, an attainment possible only through complete detachment. Thus in the myth, "The Parade of Ants," we read:

> Life in the cycle of the countless rebirths is like a vision in a dream. The gods on high, the mute trees and the stones, are alike apparitions in this fantasy. But Death administers the law of time. Ordained by time, Death is the master of all. Perishable as bubbles are the good and the evil of the beings of the dream. In unending cycles the good and evil alternate. Hence the wise are attached to neither, neither the evil nor the good. The wise are not attached to anything at all.[8]

In Mahayana Buddhism, once such a state of nonattachment is achieved, one takes a vow not to enter the final state of union with Buddha (nirvana) until all beings have been similarly enlightened and saved from this meaningless and futile existence of utterly unreal and transient cycles. Thus as a "boddhisattva" one is suspended between time (samsara) and eternity (nirvana). Actually the boddhisattva is abandoning nirvana since no such perfect state of complete salvation from the cyclic aeons can ever be reached--they are eternal and eternally meaningless. Such is the significance of absolute detachment, and ultimately the equivalence of samsara and nirvana.

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[7] Cited by Cairnes, p. 150.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 154.

The concept of the mandala was repeated also in shrines and temples, the best known of these being the Borobudur in Java. Here the pilgrim climbs eight successive terraces until he reaches the architectural symbol for Mount Meru, the home of the gods (the highest peak of the Himalayas). Each terrace symbolizes a step away from the unreality of the Wheel of Time toward a reintegration of the person with Vajrasattva residing at Mount Meru. The basement and five square terraces represent the plane of the material world, decoration and relief sculpture being very realistic. The fifth square terrace is transitional, the sculpture more formal, mounting toward the shaft which points to emptiness, the void, the final goal of the pilgrim. The experience of the Borobudur, this mandala in stone, gives one not only the sense of eternity, but also a new view of the world. Sri Ramakrishna provided a description of such a new evaluation:[9]

> The Divine Mother revealed to me in the Kali temple that it was She who had become everything. . . . She

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[9] In, however, a different setting since Ramakrishna was a follower of Tantric Yoga and worshipped Kali, the Mother.

> showed me that everything was full of Consciousness. The Image was Consciousness, the altar was Consciousness, the water-vessels were Consciousness, the door-sill was Consciousness, the marble floor was Consciousness--all was Consciousness. I found everything inside the room soaked, as it were, in Bliss—the Bliss of Saccurdananda. I saw a wicked man in front of the Kali temple; but in him also I saw the Power of the Divine Mother vibrating. That was why I fed a cat with the food that was to be offered to the Divine Mother.[10]

Hindu thought thus parallels archaic man's attempt at freedom from time's triumph. History, changes in institutions, societies, thought, philosophy--all are without meaning. But unlike archaic man's relish for repetition which was safe and sure because it repeated what alone was really valuable and valid (that is, the Golden Age, the archetype), the Hindu world-vision disdains such useless repetition. Instead it plunges itself into a mystic contemplation of the fully real, strives for the pure detachment of a boddhisattva, and is thereby enabled to bring sense and value to individual lives.[11]

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[10] Cairnes, p. 155.

[11] The Chinese did not spend their hours in meditational exercise on a noumenal world. Theirs was a realist view. With archaic man they shared a belief in the Golden Age, the legendary era of heroes and emperors of the third millenium B.C. The rest of history was a constant attempt to achieve the perfection attained in that glorious, heroic time. Nevertheless, while the same level was believed impossible of achievement, events in time had real meaning. It is thus that the Chinese have the greatest of all ancient historical traditions; that they emerge as the most historically minded of all ancient people; and that we are able to know so much of

Classical man

The Greeks, too, shared a cyclic view of the cosmos. Hesiod's Works and Days (eighth century, B.C.) ranks as one of the earliest witnesses. His theory of five epochs (the first of which was the Golden Age when Chronos was king in heaven) is repeated in Ovid's Metamorphosis where the ages were reduced to two: the Golden Age of Chronos and the present Age of Zeus. Virgil took up the theme, but prophesied a return to the Golden Age: a prophecy made famous by the christians who saw in it a presage for the Messiah.[12]

For Heraclitus, fire, one of the four fundamental elements, was the essence of change which characterized nature. But there was a law to change: regular cyclic patterns. Heraclitus began an attempt at a scientific

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their ancient civilization.

Chinese philosophy of history is also mythopoeic, that is, organic. For example, in the philosophy of Tung Chung-shu (second century B.C.) all things derive from Yuan the "great beginning." From Yuan is derived heaven, earth, Yin and Yang (male and female, black and white, etc.), the five elements and man equaling ten elements of heaven, a unified cosmos. Man, is, or ought to be, in close unity with heaven. In fact, Tung shows an exact correspondence between heaven and man. Harmony, unity, is the keynote of Chinese philosophy of history. Whether this world-view is based on a backward-looking dream of the Golden Age, on cyclic interpretations of the Yin and Yang, or on future catastrophic apocalypses, this world and this man's history has real meaning.

[12] Virgil, Virgil's Works: The Aeneid, Eclogues, trans. J. W. Mackail (Modern Library ed.; New York: Random House, 1934).

explanation of the cyclical Weltanschauung and he is followed by the Pythagoreans and then by Plato. In the latter's Timaeus, Critias explains the many destructions of mankind caused either by fire or water. But he adds, "Now this has the form of a myth, but really signifies a declination of the bodies moving in the heavens around the earth, and a great conflagration of things upon the earth, which recurs after long intervals. . . ."[13] Thus Plato connected cultural cycles with the movement of the heavenly bodies. In the Statesman, he described the three ages of the universe. In the first, the Divinity has a firm hold over the universe. In the second, he lets go of the helm, and the universe turns in the opposite direction, beginning to dissolve. Here there is no repetition of a Golden Age. Instead, the Divinity makes creatures "imperishable and immortal" giving them a certain amount of self-sufficiency. Naturally, their beginnings were poor and difficult. But with the gifts of the gods (fire from Prometheus, the arts from Hephaestus), man was able to progress. In the Republic, Plato showed political progress, climaxing in the reign of the philosopher-king.[14]

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[13] Plato, Timaeus.

[14] Cf. Plato, Statesman, Republic.

Aristotle recognized the cyclic nature of change in his discussions of coming to be and passing away (De Generatione et Corruptione). Nevertheless, he pointed out that while the form of the cycle may be the same, each period is different in detail, in particular. Substances may recur specifically the same (that is, their forms may recur), but differing at least numerically. In cultural life, the same system is followed: growth, maturation, decay, and death; and in the Politics Aristotle applied this to political life.

The Stoics, following the Pythagoreans, believed in an exact repetition of cycles, leaving no room for chance or for the irrational. The ages of decline would be followed by a catastrophe in which civilizations would be destroyed before being regenerated. Epicurus held a similar cyclical view, but eliminated the logos, affirming that a new world will exist again, but that time is a matter of chance.

What is important to note is not so much the individual philosopher's contribution, but the Greek philosophy of history as a whole. While they remained bound up with the cyclic systems of archaic man, although now much more highly sophisticated and based on "scientific" knowledge, Greek philosophies of history did not reject time. They were able to adjust to it because they saw time and the cyclic process which it involved as necessary, inevitable, inescapable. Although Plato and Aristotle associated cultural cycles with astral movements, they allowed for a certain freedom of the former from the latter. This was made possible by regeneration--whether caused by the catastrophic death of the last corrupted cultural cycle or by more peaceable means (for example, in Virgil) always implying hope for the return of the Golden Age. Such, for example, was the meaning of the annual celebration of the founding of Rome in which the regeneration of the cosmos was celebrated by the sovereign or by the priest. Thus for the Greeks and the Romans, unlike archaic man, historical events had a cosmic meaning, not merely because they repeated an archetype which alone was real, but because they were really cosmic events, were really necessary for the eventual dissolution and regeneration of the universe.

While archaic man was a pessimist, or at least indifferent simply because he felt he could never escape the destiny created for him by astral divinities, it was possible for the Greeks and the Romans to be more optimistic. For although they saw themselves bound to the Wheel of Time and to cyclic patterns, they were able to give a cosmic meaning to historical events by the myth of periodic regeneration. Their world was a noumenal world, a world with real meaning.

On the other hand, Buddhists and Taoists could be nothing but scandalized at the very attempts of the Greeks and Romans. Nothing could be so foreign to Oriental thought as an attempt to establish a meaning or ultimate significance to what is material. Even though Ramakrishna thought well to feed the cat, he did it only because the cat participated in bliss, the eternal. Far from searching for meaning, the Buddhist seeks detachment from the search for meaning. Rather than being satisfied with enacting myth-dramas as archaic man, or coming to terms with the Wheel of Time by discovering a cosmic meaning in singular, historical events as the Greeks, the Buddhist and Taoist attempted to escape altogether or to deny time's triumph.

Contemporaries

In the Western world, it has been only in the twentieth century that there is renewed interest in cyclical theories. The first of these and perhaps the most impressive because of the extraordinary impact it had upon its contemporaries, is the organic theory of Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) as expressed in his Decline of the West.[15]

Anyone who has had the courage (for indeed the two volumes of the Decline present a formidable task even to the most energetic of readers) to read and study the Decline of the West at first hand is surely overwhelmed by its erudition and penetrating analyses. At the same time, if he lets himself be penetrated by the full impact of the Spenglerian vision, he comes up from this sea of closely woven impressions and correlations with the sense of utter futility in the face of what Spengler sees as the decline of Western culture. For, says Spengler, world history is organic; it is not simply a piling up of facts and relating them in a static cause-effect continuity. Rather "what concerns us is not what the historical facts which appear at this or that time *are*, per se, but what they signify, what they point to, by *appearing*."[16] Applying this morphology to world history, Spengler believes that he can introduce the "Copernican" revolution so much needed in the current Ptolemaic system of world history; this is, he admits no privileged position for any culture, be it the

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[15] Oswald Spengler, The Decline of the West, trans. Charles F. Atkinson (2 vols.; New York: Knopf, 1945).

[16] Quoted in Gardiner, p. 191.

Chinese, the Indian, the Graeco-Roman (Classical), the Egyptian, the Arabian (Magian), or the Western (Faustian). Thus, he asserts,

> I see, in place of that empty figment of one *linear* history which can only be kept by shutting one's eyes to the overwhelming multitude of facts, the drama of a *number* of mighty Cultures, each springing with primitive strength from the soil of the mother-region . . . each stamping its material, its mankind, in *its own* image; each having *its own* idea, *its own* passions, *its own* life, will and feeling, *its own* death. . . . I see world-history as a picture of endless formations and transformations, of the marvelous waxing and waning of organic forms.[17]

Spengler's work presents a mightily convincing argument for cultural cyclicism. His contention is, of course, that the present times manifest the beginning of Western civilization, a word which for Spengler signifies the decline of the culture, and the beginning of the end of that spirit which was able to give life to a whole people for so many centuries. Such decline is as inevitable as the fact that plants and individual humans decline and eventually die. It is inescapable. And it is as foolish to fight against it as it would be to grapple with death itself. "Modern" man is caught in the organic web. Thus for Western man, art--painting, sculpture, music, architecture--is dead in the springtime of Western civilization. In its place stands, not the I-Thou relations of man and man, and man and nature, but the man-machine relation which saps the "becomingness" of things, transforming them into more static realities. The signs of the times are everywhere for Spengler, from the American gigantism which is merely the Western form of the gigantism seen in Imperial Rome, which too was in process of degeneration from the Appolinian-classical culture, to the atheism of the Nietzsche and the soul-less irreligious megalopolis of the twentieth century.

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[17] *Ibid.*, p. 194.

What is of basic interest to us, however, is Spengler's rejection of universal humanity as the basis for world-history. In reciting the history of the fall of the great Mexican civilization at the hands of a few adventurers, Spengler claims "that the history of humanity has no meaning whatever and that deep significances reside only in the life-courses of the separate Cultures. Their inter-relations are unimportant and accidental."[18] Each culture is to be treated as its own unit, given its own place and its own importance. The true nature of history is the becoming, not the thing-become. According to Spengler, historians had confused nature and history. Applying the rules and laws of a static nature to the story of humanity, they had been led to believe that it narrates the rise of humanity from infancy to adulthood in a continuous line of progress. Such is the blindness of Western man, "the lordly outlook of the West European--he will only notice that which approaches him from one or another antiquity by the proper and respectful route of a Middle Ages, and that which goes its own way will get but little of his attention."[19]

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[18] Spengler, II, 44.

In many areas, the arguments presented by Arnold J. Toynbee (1889-) in the twelve volumes of his A Study of History[20] do not differ radically from those of Spengler. Toynbee argues that historians have been wrong in treating the nation as the basic unit of historical study. Instead it is a civilization which is at the base for the understanding of history. While Spengler chose to deal with eight such units, Toynbee discovers twenty-six, beginning with the Egyptian and ending with the Western, including two Orthodox Christian groups and treating abortive (for example, Scandinavian) and arrested (for example, Polynesian, Eskimo) civilizations. Toynbee's conclusions concerning the genesis, growth and breakdown of civilizations are novel and arresting and have since added bywords in the discussion of these phenomena: challenge-response rhythms (beats), withdrawal and return.

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[19] *Ibid.*, II, 38.

[20] Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, abridged by D. C. Somervill (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).

Nevertheless, in spite of many similarities--inevitable in two well-trained men contemplating the same phenomena--there is a basic difference between Spengler and Toynbee. Indeed, Toynbee is a response to Spengler and to the tremendous pessimistic impact the latter had made on the early generations of the twentieth century. Toynbee flatly rejects Spengler's biological metaphor:

> The inclination to introduce such analogies is merely an example of that myth-making or fictional infirmity of historical minds to which we have already referred: the tendency to personify and label groups or institutions--"Britain," "France," "the Church," "the Press," "the Turk" and so on--and to treat these abstractions as persons. It is sufficiently evident that the representation of a society as a personality or organism offers us no adequate expression of the society's relation to its individual members.[21]

Toynbee goes on to define his society as "a product of the relations between individuals, and these relations of theirs arise from the coincidence of their individual fields of action. This coincidence combines the individual fields into a common group, and this common group is what we call a society."[22] Thus Toynbee places primary emphasis on the action of the individual.

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[21] Ibid., p. 211. [22] Ibid.

We can readily see the result of Toynbee's accent. In opposition to the pessimism of Spengler which condemned the men of his own and of many future generations to a subservience to historical fate (having been born into the springtime of civilization, they could do nothing to escape the calling of "blood" or the "unconscious" even if they wished to), Toynbee chooses to emphasize the dynamic possibilities of the single individual (Bergson's "mystics")[23] and his capacity to change, direct, and dominate the flow of history. Thus much of Toynbee's philosophy of history is centered about the work of the creative individual, or creative minorities, working within a civilization for its own advancement.

But historical facts show that civilizations do weaken and finally disintegrate. Searching for the causes of such a breakdown Toynbee rejects all deterministic explanations, including that of Spengler and the biological analogy.[24] He rejects as equally untenable the racialist theory, which demands the infusion of new blood into a dying race before new progress will be seen. More serious, however, is the cyclic theory which Toynbee is constrained to refute as well. He admits that even his own contributions have made it seem that cycles are indeed the plan of history.

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[23] Cf. Henri Bergson, Les deux sources de la morale et de la réligion (Genève: Skira, 1945), pp. 246-51.

[24] Toynbee, pp. 246 ff.

> Certainly, in the movement of all these forces that weave the web of human history, there is an obvious element of recurrence. Yet the shuttle which shoots backward and forward across the loom of Time in a perpetual to-and-fro is all this time bringing into existence a tapestry in which there is manifestly a developing design and not simply an endless repetition of the same pattern.[25]

Thus Toynbee's system is "a major irreversible movement" made possible by a "minor repetitive movement." In the end, Toynbee offers a hope to Western man:

> This is a message of encouragement for us children of the Western Civilization as we drift today along, with none but stricken civilizations around us. It may be that Death the Leveller will lay his icy hand on our civilization also. But we are not confronted with any Saeva Necessitas. The dead civilizations are dead by fate, or "in the course of nature," and therefore our living civilization is not doomed inexorably in advance to "join the majority" of its species. . . . The divine spark of creative power is still alive in us, and if we have the grace to kindle it into flame, then the stars in their courses cannot defeat our efforts to attain the goal of human endeavour.[26]

After listening to this message from Toynbee, the twentieth century had to wait a long time before he offered a more tangible solution. In the volumes of his study published after a long interval which included the

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[25] *Ibid.*, p. 253.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 254.

Second World War, Toynbee showed that the goal for which each civilization strives is the creation of a great world religion. Thus, if man of the Western civilization wishes to rekindle this "spark" he must move on to the creation of a universal religion, made of the elements of Buddhism, Islamism, Christianity, and Judaism. Most recently, Toynbee emphasizes the salvational hope in religion:

> I think it may be time to turn back in that direction, towards religion. I don't mean going to church and reciting certain creeds, the outward form of religion. For the last century or two organized religion has come to mean less and less and because we are alienated from organized religion, we turn to political ideologies as substitutes. I think they are very unsatisfying substitutes. I don't think the future lies with these ideologies, really.
>
> . . . .
>
> By religion, I mean the inward, spiritual form of religion. That is something which--unlike great ability in art, science, and technology--is found in every human being, if you can only draw it out. It is part of being human, but usually it only comes in times of great crisis.[27]

A final note is struck to this school on time and history by Sigmund Freud.[28] Freud, as all other giants of the intellectual life before him, was aware that he would have to some day tackle the ultimate problem of the meaning of human life and history. His first attempt at such an explanation came in Totem and Taboo (1912). Here Freud works out a theory on the origins of mankind. Readers will remember that one of the most trying and shocking experiences of Freud's life was his discovery that the stories of infantile sexual seduction related by his patients were all fiction. The strain this placed upon his own mental capacities was enormous.[29] Yet, Freud felt that he had discovered the root of such fiction. It lay in the unconscious remembrance of a primeval event, the murder of the dominant male in the human horde at its origins. Since this male was unlimited in power, he banished all other males and appropriated all females to himself--until the other males banded together, defeated and murdered him. Then realizing that a continuance of such violence would only mean their own final destruction, they came to sharing agreements. The guilt of the patricide was sublimated in totem worship in which an animal-totem replaced the primeval father. But in the evolution of culture, a

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[27] "Toynbee on America," Life, LXIII (December 8, 1967), 108 ff.

[28] Cf. Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, trans. Joan Riviere (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, n.d.); Moses and Monotheism, trans. Katherine Jones (London: Hogarth Press, 1949); The Future of an Illusion, trans. W. D. Robson Scott (London: Hogarth Press, 1949); cf. also Psychoanalysis and History, ed. Bruce Mazlish (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963); Ernest Jones, The Life and Work of

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Sigmund Freud, ed. and abridged by Lionel Trilling and Steven Marcus (New York: Doubleday, 1961).

[29] Cf. Jones, The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud.

story which Freud continues in more detail in Moses and Monotheism, published shortly before he died in England in 1939, the memory of this original event faded from men's minds, only to be revived in the early history of the Jews. We need not here follow the story in detail, except to say that Freud was attempting, through the primeval patricide event to account for christian anti-semitism, and at the same time was searching for the meaning of human history.

Now while Freud's account has been interpreted, and challenged on every account, the fact that it stands widely respected, and perhaps that it is shared by large numbers of twentieth-century people demands our attention. The reality of the murder of the primeval father has the quality of myth rather than historical event. In response to criticisms over this, Freud wrote to Einstein, "It may perhaps seem to you as though our theories are a kind of mythology. . . . But does not every science come in the end to a kind of mythology?"[30] In fact, Freud's theory is based on a concept of time which is peculiarly his own, yet entirely reminiscent of ancient theories. As Philip Rieff remarks: "Freud was fascinated and horrified by the power of the past."[31] Through his experimental work with patients he became aware that the real essence of psychotherapy was recall and reminiscence, that it was not the immediate past which was so important, but the remote past, childhood, infancy. In constructing his theory of culture, Freud simply applied these discoveries of individual history to the history of civilization.

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[30] Sigmund Freud, Collected Papers, V, 283, cited by Philip Rieff, "The Meaning of History and Religion in Freud's Thought," Psychoanalysis and History, p. 23.

Thus for Freud culture and civilization represent for humanity what maturity represents for an adult individual: an attempt to escape the past, to overcome time. How is this accomplished? One must examine the crucial events in the history of the individual (or in humanity), those _kairoi_, moments decisive for the future. But the true nature of the _kairos_ is that it is simply a repetition of what has happened before. Hence, there is nothing new in history. History is a repetition, a renewal, a reenactment of what has gone before. The _kairos_ continues to live, to be active in what Freud called tradition ("the historical context of the mass unconscious").[32] Thus the present and the future are _latent_ in the past. In the end, the inner core of history is circular, a reproduction, a reduplication of the primal kairotic event which fixates all time upon itself.

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[31] _Ibid_., p. 25. [32] _Ibid_., p. 30.

With his usual incisiveness and penetration, Freud was able to see that his theory was directly the contrary of those progress theories holding sway in his own time. He felt these to be naive. To be able to break away from tradition was simply an illusion. Real historical movement can come only from the prophetic action of a recall to tradition. In such a way, human history is a history of ambiguity.[33] Human beings in attempting to forget the primeval kairotic crime are able only to heighten their sense of guilt. So that the price of progress, as Freud said, is paid in the forfeiture of happiness through the heightening of a sense of guilt.[34] The basic struggle is between _Eros_ and _Thanatos_, life and death. In _Civilization and Its Discontents_, Freud concluded:

> And now, I think, the meaning of the evolution of civilization is no longer obscure to us. It must present the struggle between Eros and Death, between the instinct of life and the instinct of destruction, as it works itself out in the human species. This struggle is what all life essentially consists of, and the evolution of civilization may therefore be simply described as the struggle for life of the human species. And it is this battle of the giants that our nurse-maids try to appease with their

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[33] Cf. Hans Meyerhoff, "Freud and the Ambiguity of Culture," _Psychoanalysis and History_, pp. 56 ff.

[34] Freud, _Civilization and Its Discontents_.

lullaby about Heaven.[35]

By now it will have become apparent that for Freud the real price of civilization and culture is neurosis. Such is the meaning of the malaise seen throughout human history. Its roots lie in the primeval revolt of son against father, an event which marked all mankind to the present in its mythical consequences. In attempting to overcome guilt by its sublimation in religion in the form of a strict conscience, the superego is strengthened and a sense of guilt increases. Each time a resolution is made of the conflict, it is only temporary and delicate. As the story is in the development of the individual, so in society. The truly great are those who are able and who try to break through the historical prison by the sublimation of the death-instinct and destructiveness. Freud's is a stoic doctrine, just as he himself was a stoic in his personal life. He is far from the optimism either of Condorcet or of the early christian community, and more in accord with the classical tradition, and the pessimism of Spengler.

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[35] _Ibid._, p. 69.

The Christian School

Beginning with the first christians, but having its roots deep in the judaic tradition, the christian Weltanschauung has remained strong for nearly two thousand years, and claim, at least theoretically, all those who adhere to the christian teachings, or at least to some sect thereof.

Early christian thought

The very basis for the distinction between christian and pagan thought was the concept of time and history.

In the primitive christian community, the work of Christ was the center of biblical history which in its turn was the measure of all history. Thus the norm of christianity, Christ Himself, became the norm of all history. While pagan societies in their failure to achieve a true freedom from cyclicism remained somewhat melancholy,[36] christianity was able to effect a dynamism and buoyancy due to its liberation from astral destiny. As Tatian wrote: "We are above Fate. The sun and the moon were made for us; how am I to worship what are my servitors."[37] Indeed, Tatian was merely repeating

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[36] Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man, I, 177.

[37] Cited by Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion, p. 132.

Jewish biblical teaching wherein the monotheistic accent served to point up the Jewish concept of man's freedom from gods in whatever shape and form, and his ultimate and final subjection to the one God-Person Jawhe.

If "pagan" philosophy of history was based on a circular view of time, the Hebraic-christian view was linear. The entire world-view of the Jews was based on historic events, especially two: Creation and the Coming of the Messiah. There were no cycles, because each event--or at least these two--was unrepeatable, unique; each represented a consequence, or rather, a prolongation or development of the former. The Hebrew concept of linear time did not change for the christians. Rather it was in the _division_ of time that a profound and important alteration came. The judaic center of time was in the future: the coming of the Messiah. The christian center of time was in the past: the work of the Christ, the historic Jesus of Nazareth. So that the bipartite christian division of "this aeon" and the "aeon to come" coincided with the traditional Hebrew tripartite divisions of time (Fig. 2).[38] "This truth is of immense import; and all the ideas one can have on the course of

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[38] Fig. 2 (Time continuum) p. 90, taken from Oscar Cullman, _Le Christ et le temps_ (Paris: Delachaux et Nièstle, 1957); _Christ and Time_ (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 55.

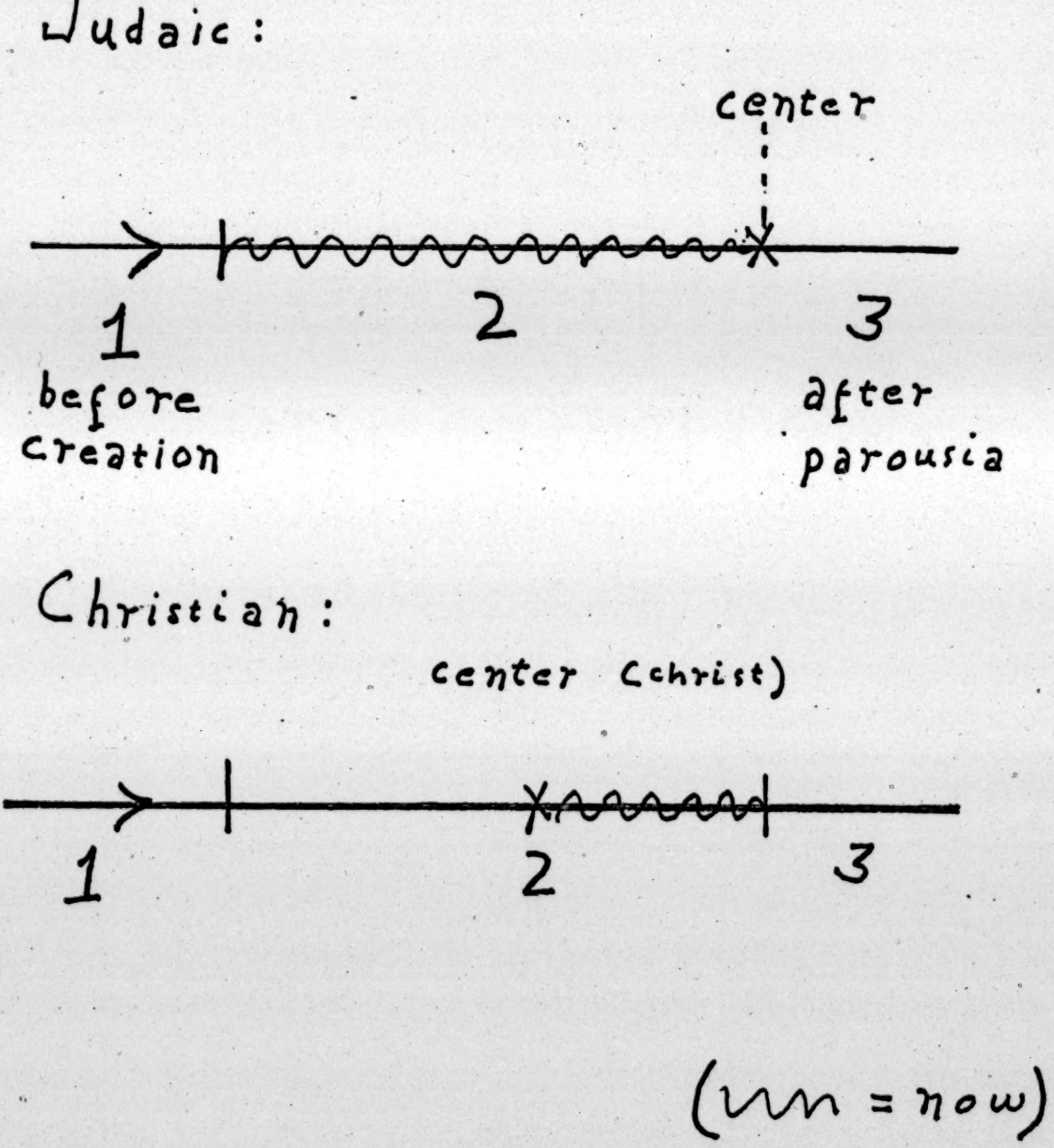
Judaic:
center
1
2
3
before creation
after parousia
Christian:
center (Christ)
1
2
3
(ᴧᴧ = now)

Fig. 2.--Time Continuum

time lose, for the primitive Church, all fundamental value in the presence of the truly revolutionary affirmation, adopted without reserve by all of primitive christianity: the middle of history has already been achieved."[39]

The fact that christians changed the division of time does not mean that they changed the concept of time.[40] In fact, theirs was a radically time-oriented philosophy. The whole history of salvation (the nucleus and measure of all "profane" history) was a time-story, not a space-story. Eternity itself was not, as for the Hellenists, a non-time, or even a somewhere beyond; rather it was unlimited time, time without end. The time-scheme employed by the early christians was eminently theological in nature, and can be discovered through the kerygmata, the preachings of the Apostles, especially found in Paul and the Acts. Salvation history begins with man's revolt against the divine revelation: sin, the "fall." But the malediction which is vested upon man is certainly not God's last word. In his love and mercy Jawhe chooses a minority for the future redemption of all. Thus the history of salvation becomes the history of a single people. But the principle of substitution demands a progressive reduction. Thus even without the elect people (Israel) only a remnant will serve as the elements of redemption, and within the remnant, a single man, the suffering servant, as second Isaias tells us,[41] or the "Son of Man," in Daniel.[42] This unique person is Jesus of Nazareth who by his death and resurrection redeems the people of Israel, and through them the world. History of salvation and human history have attained their center; the decisive battle is won, although the war continues. During the period following the coming of the "Son of Man" the same principles of substitution and election apply, not in progressive reduction, but in progressive expansion: the movement from unity in Christ to a plurality of saved persons. From Christ to the Apostles to the Church which is itself the Body of Christ and which performs for humanity that function of the Old Testament remnant, and so on until the whole kingdom of God and Creation itself arrives at the new Heaven and the new Earth (cf. Fig. 3, page 93).

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[39] *Ibid.*

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 65.

What of the present period in the time-scheme of primitive christianity? Since the replacement of the past as the center of history, the Greek emphasis on

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[41] Cf. the later chapters in Isaias.

[42] Dan. 7:13.

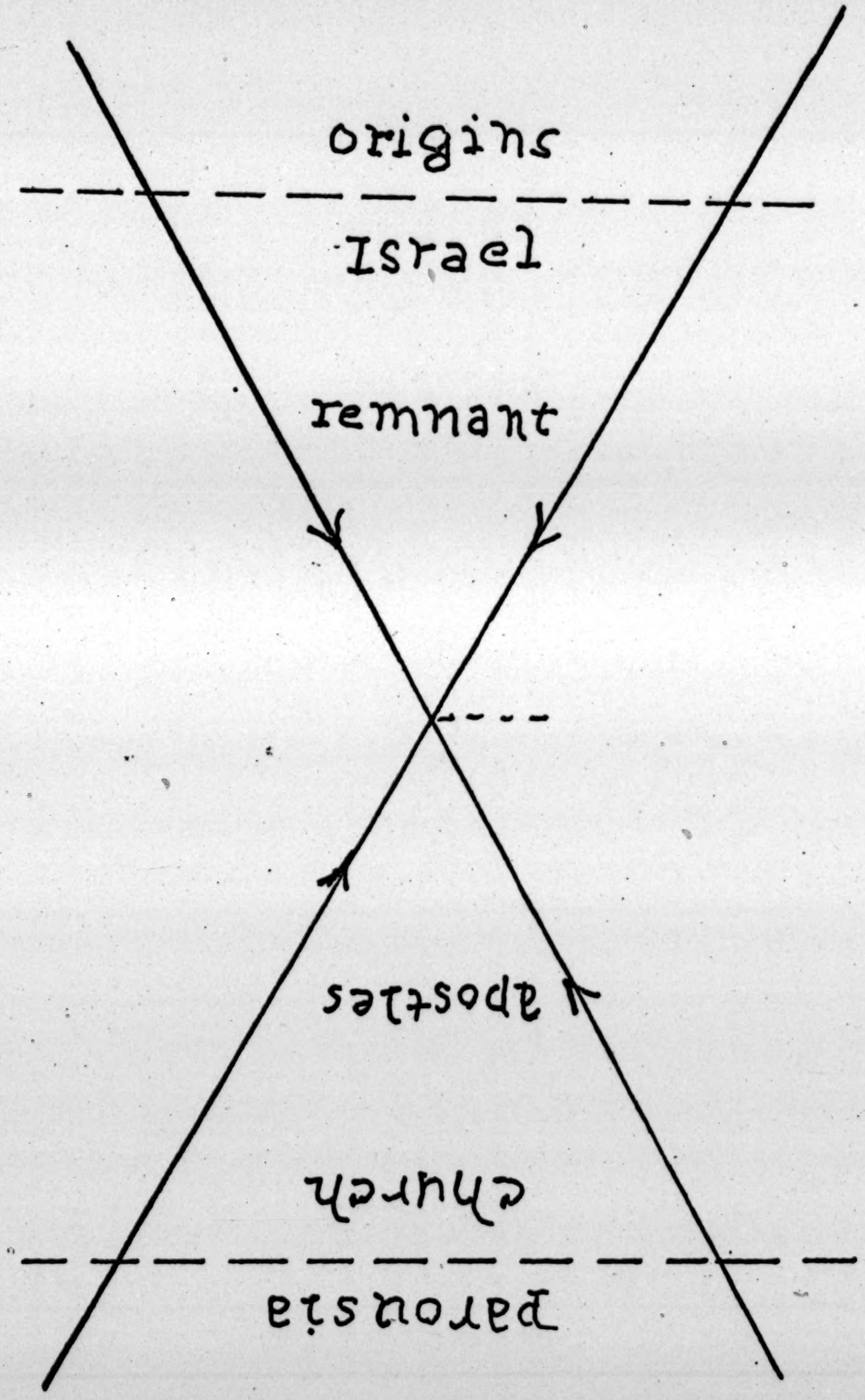
origins
Israel
remnant
apostles
church
parousia

Fig. 3.--Reduction/Expansion

"expectation" is altered. Altered, but not diminished, for, although the decisive battle is won, the war is still to be fought to the finish. If anything, expectation is intensified because of the assurance now given by the central victory. But expectation is no longer the centerpoint of emphasis and primitive christianity is not primarily eschatological, oriented toward the future. Rather the present period which began after Easter is the touchstone of the entire system of christian thought. The primitive christians were, perhaps before anything else, present-minded; aware that their work was a real participation in the building of the Kingdom of God. Thus, the earliest of the ancient confessions, *Kyrios Christos*, Christ reigns, underlines the fact that these people, "this royal race," participated in the kingdom.[43] The special nature of the present-time derives from its rapport with the central event. The church is in the new "aeon" because it obviously is born since Easter. But it is not yet at the end, after the second coming, the *Parousia*. As Neibuhr says, "The full implications of the double idea that the 'Kingdom of God has come' and that it 'is coming' is that history is an interim."[44] Thus, the present moment participates already in the last times, but is not yet the end. This, as Cullman remarks, is "the unique dialectic and the unique dualism in the New Testament. It is not a dialectic between the here-below and the beyond, nor between time and eternity, but between the present and the future."[45]

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[43] Apoc. 1:6; I Pet. 2:9.

[44] Niebuhr, I, 48.

For the primitive christian community, the present-time, the time of the church, was the time of Christ's reign, the reign of Him Who is seated "at the right hand of God." The number of times this expression was used by early christians points up the character of the present-time and the present-mindedness of the christians. The earliest liturgical prayer, Maranatha, was a call not only for the Lord to come the second time, but to be present now in the liturgical assemblies, where the sacred mysteries were enacted, and where the Church of Christ was to be found, the body of Christ (soma pneumatikon) become visible at Pentecost with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The christian awareness, as well, of the defects which existed among them made it clear that they were but the couriers of the end. Hence the emphasis on preaching the evangel which the early christians saw as their evident duty in face of the apocalyptic passages of the synoptics (for example, Mark 13:10: "And the gospel must first be preached to all nations"; and Matthew 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come").

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[45] Cullman, p. 103.

All this explains why the primitive christian community was so aware of living each day as an instrument for the coming of salvation, of being so proud to be living in the end-times. This was only possible because of the new divisions of time created by the coming of Christ. Such an emphasis on the present and its value was impossible in judaic thought, clearly oriented toward a future Messiah, as well as in hellenistic thought, where the present could merely be a repetition of what must have happened many times before and will happen again in the future. It was the coming of Christ which made possible a full concentration on the present time. Only in rapport with the christocentric nature of their time-system were the early christians able to give the present a particular and unique sense in a philosophy of history.

Saint Augustine

To say that this primitive world-view based on the unique coming of Christ and his once-for-all death and resurrection was completely lost in the consequent centuries would certainly be an exaggeration. But such was the strength of the hellenistic world-view with its cyclic time and meaningless present that later christianity could not avoid coming to grips with it (merely because Christianity itself presented the very contrary of hellenistic thought) and itself becoming tainted and thus modified.

If Plotinus' "the end of life is the annulment of history and of the self in history. Whatever is involved in 'process' never 'possesses Being'"[46] is an example of hellenistic pessimism concerning man's possibilities and the ultimate problem of evil, then Clement's answer that "the word of God became man in order that thou mayest become a god"[47] shows a christian response to hellenistic charges. It was, indeed, over the problem of evil that the question of time, and ultimately, that the entire philosophy of history and a complete world-view was challenged. And it was to attempt to provide an intelligent answer to the problem of evil, or at least to give an explanation of cosmic and salvation history so as to make evil at least semi-intelligible, that Saint Augustine (354-430), some four hundred years after the New Testament writers, composed his De Civitate Dei.[48]

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[46] Plotinus, Enniads, Bk. IV, 8, cited by Niebuhr, II, 13.

[47] Clement, cited by Niebuhr, I, 144.

The first eleven books, treating of the calamities undergone by the Romans long before christianity and its prohibition of the worship of the gods, are but a prelude to Augustine's major project: "I will endeavor to treat of the origin, and progress, and deserved destinities of the two cities (the earthly and the heavenly, to wit), which, as we said, are in this present world commingled, and as it were entangled together."[49]

Describing the origins of the two cities, Augustine refutes the pagan notion of cyclicism, the first such formal philosophic christian refutation. In New Testament terms, he affirms that

> For once Christ died for our sins; and, rising from the dead, he dieth no more. "Death hath no more dominion over Him"; and we ourselves after the resurrection shall be "ever with the Lord," to whom we now say, as the sacred Psalmist dictates, "Thou shalt keep us, O Lord, Thou shalt preserve us, from this generation." And that too which follows is, I think, appropriate enough: "The wicked walk in a circle"; not because their life is to recur by means of these circles, which these philosophers imagine, but because the path in which their false doctrine

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[48] Saint Augustine, The City of God, trans. Marcus Dodds (New York: The Modern Library, 1950). Cf. Lowith, Meaning in History, pp. 160-73.

[49] Augustine, p. 346.

now runs is circuitous.[50]

There is a complete and absolute incompatibility between hellenistic cyclicism and christian linearism because of the once-for-all event of the incarnation and redemption of Christ. But if one denies cyclicism, one must build a world-view in its place. Augustine proceeds to do this, beginning with Book XIV:

> Accordingly, [because of the sins of angels and of men] two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word glories in itself, the latter in the Lord. For the one seeks glory from men; but the greatest glory of the other is God, the witness of conscience. The one lifts up its head in its own glory; the other says to its God, "Thou art my glory, and lifter up of mine head."[51]

The two cities thus are two peoples, inhabiting the earth together, their natures determined by what they love. They are mystical cities (the very term "city" is a symbolic mode of designation: Jerusalem and Babylon) inhabited by those who either accept or reject God. Dwelling together, they nevertheless participate in eternity, the one damned, the other predestined for eternal glory. "Both alike either enjoy temporal good things, or are afflicted with temporal evils, but with diverse faith, diverse hope, and diverse love, until they must be separated by the last judgment, and each must receive her own end, of which there is no end."[52]

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[50] Ibid., pp. 393-94.

[51] Ibid., p. 668.

Nevertheless, the Augustinian refutation of cyclicism is not of such great importance as two other prime facts, the one significant for later christian thought, the other for future philosophies of history in the Western world. First, while Augustine refuted cyclicism on the basis of the unique event in time, he managed to orient the present-time, that is, the time of the church, toward eschatological events--the final separation of the two cities. The eschatological emphasis of Augustine managed to influence almost all later christian philosophies of history. The profound concern of the primitive christian community for the present, its pride in ruling, now, in the kingdom with Christ, is clearly contrasted with the times after Augustine until our own day by a marked disinterest in this present as merely a preparation or proof for the eventual final division between the two cities. This is not a backward step toward the judaic concept of the division of time, but rather the result of the hellenistic influence which saw neither beginning nor end (thus Augustine's emphasis on Creation and final judgment) and came to a sorrowful peace pact with evil as partaking in the general meaninglessness of history or as being an inevitable by-product of man's involvement in time. From Augustine's time, christian philosophies of history will always reach an impasse at the problem of how to explain evil in the context of the present and how to give an ultimate meaning to the present moment. As we shall see, they will not be very successful in overcoming this barrier.

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[52] Ibid.

Second, Augustine was perhaps the first man in the times after Christ to attempt to write a universal history of man. Although nowhere explicated, it is clearly implied in his work. At the heart of such an attempt is a belief in the unity of mankind and thus in the unity of its history--the two unities offering the possibility for the first time in the development of thought, of a universal history. For if history is cyclical, then either a universal history will be merely the repetition of the original myth of which the present is but a re-enactment, or there will be no universal history at all because the present (history) has no reality other than as reflection of Ultimate Being (Buddha, Nirvana). The history of peoples at all times and in all places can only have a meaning, indeed, can only be essayed, when some significance is given to the present moment in itself (whether by association with a future event: judaic eschatology; a past event: primitive christianity; or, practically speaking, a future final event: post-Augustinian christianity). The strength or weakness of such universal histories will depend on the ultimate significance of the present moment. If history becomes spatialized, it will flounder on the problem of evil and here-below-beyond dichotomy. If it negates its past-unique, it vainly will search for an ersatz in a present-unique-eternal (timelessness). Both mistakes condemn it to sterility. We shall see that the first was made by post-Augustinian world-views; the second by modern "non-christian" world-view.

Joachim of Floris

The christian philosophy of history, whether of the primitive christian community or that of Saint Augustine,[53] with its basic understanding of the linear scheme of time, was never forgotten. But, as we have noted, it was forced to come to grips with hellenism. Only two possibilities existed between the two views, so violently and fundamentally opposed one to the other: the christianization of hellenism (which never occurred) or the hellenization of christianity, which has been the overall tendency until our own day.[54] The primitive, temporal scheme of salvation history (and thus of cosmic history) has gradually ceded to the spatial and metaphysical scheme of hellenism. This can be seen in the gradual elimination of the expectation of the end of the world. The future was so closely tied with the present and the past in virtue of the unique center of history (the work of the Christ), that the continuity of the line of the history of salvation was much more carefully and forcefully emphasized in primitive christianity than in a hellenized christianity, where the end of the world was more spatialized and where eternity was conceived as a no-time.

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[53] There is a great need for scholarly work on the philosophy of history in Irenaeus (+202 A.D.), Origin (185-*ca.* 264), Gregory Nazianzen (*ca.* 329-*ca.* 389), and Gregory of Nyssa (335-*ca.* 384). Cullman, for example, believes that Irenaeus' rectilinear system is excessive, forcing him to minimize original sin as a lack of natural maturity. Cf. Cullman, p. 40.

The fall of the Roman Empire, despite its interpretations by Augustine and by his follower Orosius,[55] together with the knowledge and understanding of the Egyptian, Babylonian, and Greek intellectual constructions, were a strong counterpoint to a linear view of history. Natural events, as well as these profound human events, strongly suggested that the cyclic movement of growth, decline and degeneration was really the normal pattern of human society.

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[54] Cullman, pp. 41 ff.

[55] Paulus Orosius, The Seven Books of History against the Pagans, trans. Irving W. Raymond (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), pp. 70-71.

> As a result, the idea that human history, taken as a whole, has a significant structure, reflecting a Divine Plan, disappeared largely from view. It was recognized that God is working out His purposes but we cannot hope to understand what these are. [Thus] generally speaking, the medievals had no philosophy of history.[56]

After Augustine, it was (and still is) widely believed that God's providence or, better, God in His providence, watches that his plan is carried out by man. But for man to be able to determine what this plan is, other than its large and general outlines (Creation-Fall-Redemption-Parousia), especially during the time between Easter and the Parousia, was considered to be beyond the possibilities of man, and perhaps indeed, a pagan attempt to discover the hidden ways of God.

A significant exception to this view was Joachim of Floris (ca. 1131-1202),[57] a Calabrian monk who received an inspiration one Pentecost into the inner meaning of Saint John's Book of Revelations. He was thereby enabled to interpret the hidden signs and symbols of the

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[56] Russell, p. 59.

[57] Cf. Lowith, pp. 145 ff.

Apocalypse and to construct what came to be known as the "Eternal Gospel," an explanation of the different epochs of mankind, based on the trinitarian doctrine.[58] What is new in Joachim's approach is his understanding of the interrelationship between universal or profane history and the history of salvation. If there is such an interdependence, the real key to history must be in the Sacred Scriptures. Thus in the Scriptures Joachim was able to find a religious understanding of history; and in history he could find hidden religious elements.

Joachim lies, then, in the direct line of descent from the primitive christians whose idea of the church as the body of Christ led to the belief that the church lies at the nucleus of universal history. Joachim's attempt is therefore nothing less than a completely religious interpretation of universal history, using the Apocalypse as key. He was very much aware of the tension between this "aeon" and the "aeon to come"; the fact that the battle is already won, but the end is not yet. The fullness of time is still to be worked out, and the interpretation of history becomes prophecy.

The end-time, however, is a complex reality consisting of a two-fold eschaton. The consummation of time does not occur beyond time, but in a last historical epoch: first the kingdom of the Spirit, then the coming of Christ and the end of the world.

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[58] Ibid., p. 47.

The implications are enormous if one understands Joachim's Kingdom of the Spirit in which there is to be no institutional church, evangelization or sacraments, because mankind will live under the plenitudo intellectus. The Kingdom of the Spirit is already a fullness. Even despite the radicalism which followed in the ranks of the Spiritual Franciscans who claimed the coming of the Third Kingdom in 1260, the Roman Church was able to see what a profound revision of the already traditional Augustinian christian interpretation of history was Joachim's. And so, in condemning Joachim and especially those who came after him, the Roman Church reemphasized the division into Old and New Testament, rejecting a possible third dispensation before the Second Coming which, she insisted, was transcendent in character. The church alone was constructed as the institution of the history and means of salvation and it will last until the end of time. There was no room in the Augustinian view thus adopted for a backward step on the part of the church.

The true opposition then between the Franciscan Spirituals and the Roman Church was based on their respective attitudes toward time. The Church was fixed on an everlasting foundation, bent on an everlasting foundation, bent on its own conservation until the Parousia. The Spirituals, on the other hand, were convinced of an interior, imminent transformation, in view of preparing or procuring the coming of the Third Kingdom. The Church, with a too-exclusive emphasis on its own present existence without sufficient attention to the eschatological implications of the New Testament, succeeded in enervating the eschatological outlook altogether. The Church thus absolutized, as it were, the now rather than insisting, as the primitive christians had done, on its dynamic quality and on the continuity and unravelling of the history of salvation.[59] On the other hand, the Spirituals looked so much to the future, that they forgot the central import of the unique center of time, in effect denigrating its very centrality in favor of the Parousia, or even of the Kingdom of the Spirit. The median way, obviously, was a difficult one to accept or to hold to.[60]

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[59] Cullman, passim.

[60] The last great formulation of the christian philosophy of history was that proferred by Bishop Bossuet (1627-1704) in his Discours sur l'histoire universelle. For Bossuet the point of emphasis was no longer the need to refute cyclicism nor to emphasize eschatology, but to prove that the whole course of human history is guided by providence. Bossuet placed the final

The Secular Progress School

Giambattista Vico

Although perhaps the last to admit it, Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) was the man who began the transition from the traditional christian world-view to modern secular interpretations. His major work, *Principles of a New Science of the Nature of Nations, from Which Are Derived New Principles of the Natural Law of Peoples*,[61] reflects his transitional role for its meaning remains somewhat of a puzzle in the history of the philosophies of history.

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touches on what is even today considered the classic (and orthodox) christian view of time. Today all christians agree to the operation of God's providence in history, although limits to it will be debated.

[61] Giambattista Vico, *The Autobiography of Giambattista Vico*, trans. Max Fisch and Thomas G. Bergin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1944); *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. from third edition by Thomas G. Bergin and Max Fisch (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1948), hereafter referred to as *NS*; Robert A. Caponigri, *Time and Idea, the Theory of History in Giambattista Vico* (Chicago: Regnery, 1953); Benedetto Croce, *The Philosophy of Giambattista Vico*, trans. R. G. Collingwood (New York: Macmillan, 1913); Robert Flint, *Vico* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1884); Elio Gianturco, "Joseph de Maistre and Giambattista Vico" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1937); Aline Lion, *The Idealistic Conception of Religion, Vico, Hegel, Gentile* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1932); Gabriel Maugain, *Étude sur l'évolution intellectuelle de l'Italie de 1657 à 1750 environ* (Paris: Hachette, 1909); Jules Michelet, *Oeuvres choisis de Vico* in *Oeuvres complètes de J. Michelet* (Paris: Flammarion, n.d.); Ernest Hatch Wilkins, *A History of Italian Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954).

Through his legal and linguistic studies, Vico realized that the accepted theories of the cultural and social institutions of ancient peoples, theories which were unquestioned in his own day, were simply wrong. For example, law had not been invented as a completely unified body; rather it evolved along with society. Vico proposed to write the principles of a "new science" of thought and institutions, and then of the universal history of man. This new science is, in Vico's own words, "a rational civil theology of divine providence which seems hitherto to have been lacking."[62]

The most explicit statement of Vico's new world-view occurs in Book Five, "The Recurrence of Human Things in the Resurgence of the Nations." Here he attempts to show that the development of cities, feudal law, and the arrival of modern nations at a true and perfect monarchy in the Middle Ages were a return to the age of heroism. Much earlier he had written:

> In the night of thick darkness enveloping the earliest antiquity, so remote from ourselves, there shines the eternal and never-failing light of a truth beyond all question: that the world of civil society has certainly been made by man, and that its principles are therefore to be found within the modification of our own human mind.[63]

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[62] Vico, New Science, sec. 342, pp. 90-91.

[63] Ibid., sec. 331, p. 84.

Now in conclusion, he modifies this:

> It is true that men have themselves made this world of nations . . . but this world without doubt has issued from a mind often diverse, at times quite contrary, and always superior to the particular ends that men had proposed to themselves.[64]

This mind Vico had already equated with Providence. Therefore, he concludes, "All the learned should admire, venerate, and desire to unite themselves to the infinite wisdom of God."[65]

Was Vico a cyclicist? Or did he believe in a linear approach in the Augustinian-Bossuet tradition? It would seem safest to conclude that Vico attempted to make a compromise. He asserted that his greatest teachers were Tacitus, Plato, Bacon, and Grotius. Add to this his intense Catholicism, especially in face of the Cartesianism then sweeping the Italian penninsula, and we can conclude that Vico tried to integrate the traditional christian teaching of providence and linear time with hellenistic cyclicism.

The ricorso or return to the heroic age is a method of development within the life of a nation, the course of which is guided ultimately by providence. Vico's definition of man as a "finite possibility tending to the infinite" expresses the tension which drives man to reach for the infinite, during which search man finds God and so creates his own history. Providence is the means of directing man in the right direction in his tension-bound journey. Leaving man free to act, God guides these free actions so that the course of history will follow an already divinely determined plan. Thus providence is the final sustaining principle of history. In this sense, Vico's history is "tension-directed." The human spirit attempts to make contemporaneous with itself all of the past, indeed universal history itself. In _ricorso_, man does not fall into a cosmic recurrence, but places, as it were, his own civilization and trial in a court of higher appeal which is universal history itself.[66] Thus, even if we were to conclude that Vico were cyclic, his cyclicism is not hopeless. He provides for the salvation of man through christianity. But in attempting to provide a rational explanation for the laws of history, Vico underplayed the divine intervention in order to discover what were the simple laws of human history. Thus he could insist at one and the same time both on man's freedom in making his own history and on divine providence working ultimately in history.

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[64] *Ibid.*, sec. 1108, p. 382.

[65] *Ibid.*, sec. 1111, p. 383.

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[66] Cf. Caponigri, _Time and Idea_; also Lowith, _Meaning in History_.

What is of final importance in the general outline of the history of idea-systems is that Vico presents a first major step since the time of the primitive christian community to provide an intelligible outline of human history, or rather to sketch the laws of universal history, without direct appeal to the divinity as the unique giver of significance and meaning to that history. As the transition, the New Science necessarily remains vague and ambiguous. As a monument toward the secularization of the philosophy of history, the New Science stands in the ranks of the finest.

The Enlightenment

Because Vico had no immediate impact on the eighteenth century we have considered him independently of the Enlightenment movement which began in the traditional christian spirit and ended with Condorcet's triumphant predictions of a purely human Golden Age. And indeed it was not until mid-nineteenth century and then again in the twentieth that Vico was rediscovered at all. As the main stream of Western philosophy of history moved from Augustine to Bossuet through Aquinas and not through Joachim and the Spiritual Franciscans, so the thread of modern secular philosophies of history moves from Voltaire to Toynbee, with Vico standing somewhere to the side, much misunderstood and badly read.

If Voltaire (1694-1778), who in many ways is the incarnation of the Aufklarung, had indeed begun his work by supporting Bossuet's providence theories, he finished by undermining what was considered the very institutional embodiment of that providence. By commencing his work with a study of China, he underlined the fact that not only was the Chinese civilization older than the Old Testament histories, but in his opinion far more advanced. His satire is biting:

> In following the historical fate of the petty Jewish nation, it is seen that no other end was possible for it. It prided itself on having issued from Egypt like a horde of robbers, carrying off all it had borrowed from the Egyptians; it was its glory never to have spared age or sex in the towns which it had captured. It dared to manifest an irreconciliable hatred for all other nations; it revolted against all its masters; always superstitious, always Barbarous, abject in misfortune, and insolent in prosperity. Such were the Jews in the eyes of the Greeks and Romans, who could read their books; but in the eyes of Christians enlightened by faith, they have been our precursors, they have prepared the way for us, they have acted as the heralds of Providence.[67]

And his logic is simple. Against biblical facts and christian beliefs he lines up argument after argument based on simple human reason. What does civilization mean? Simply the progress of law, morality, science, industry. What prevents this progress? Dogma and war.

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[67] Voltaire, cited by Lowith, p. 106.

The conclusion is clear.

What is perhaps less clear is that in so treating universal history, Voltaire has completely divided sacred history from "profane" history. He wished to speak simply as philosopher, as historian, not as theologian. Voltaire proclaimed sacred history incomprehensible to human reason, and therefore incompatible with a reasonable, philosophic discussion of the growth of civilizations.

This dramatic change in the view of metahistory came as the result of questions on evil. In the background of Candide where Voltaire criticizes the belief in the providential intervention in world history and concludes that "we must attend to our gardens," was the Lisbon earthquake of 1756 which caused an intellectual shock throughout the world of the European elite. Occurring on a Sunday morning, with good christians worshipping their God in their parish churches, the question was apparent: Where is this Providence who allows such a disaster to befall his faithful? Voltaire's answer is as simple as the question: There is no Providence. To interpret universal history through sacred history is to subject it to an irrational yardstick; there is no evidence whatsoever for God's actions in history nor for a final glorious end toward which history progresses.[68]

Not so restrained as Voltaire in his ideas on progress was Antoine-Nicolas de Condorcet (1743-1794), the only Enlightenment philosopher to witness the Revolution of 1789. His Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind, written without benefit of sources and in hiding from Jacobin forces, is a veritable paean to the liberty newly acquired (partially through Voltaire's efforts) by the liberation of universal history from its tutelage to the Bible.

> Such is the aim of the work that I have undertaken, and its result will be to show by appeal to reason and fact that nature has set no terms to the perfection of human faculties; that the perfectibility, from now onwards independent of any power that might wish to halt it, has no other limit than the duration of the globe upon which nature has cast us.[69]

In viewing all the facts at his disposal, Condorcet could find only "the strongest reasons for believing that nature has set no limit to the realization of our hopes."[70]

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[68] We ought also to note the influence of the new science on Voltaire and other Enlightenment thinkers. With the new knowledge, man had to invent a more modest theory of his meaning. The eighteenth century answered his need by the theory of a laborious but gradual progress. Cf. Lowith, p. 108.

[69] Antoine-Nicolas de Condorcet, Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind, trans. June Barraclough (New York: The Noonday Press, 1955). Quoted in Gardiner, p. 52.

[70] Quoted in Gardiner, p. 58.

Condorcet is no longer beset by the same problems which bothered Voltaire. The basic work of the intellectual destruction of the powers of Providence and the claims of the Church had already been accomplished. Therefore, Condorcet expresses the first major philosophical sketch of a new world-view born of the Enlightenment and freed from biblical or divine interpretations. Using the scientific methods already established by Voltaire and Montesquieu before him, taking into account as many documents on the economic, social and religious conditions as were available to him, Condorcet can only conclude that the universal history of mankind is the story of progress. A progress which "will doubtless vary in speed, but . . . will never be reversed as long as the earth occupies its present place in the system of the universe, and as long as the general laws of this system produce neither a general cataclysm nor such changes as will deprive the human race of its present faculties and its present resources."[71]

Progress is subject to the same laws as the individual; indeed, the whole of the universe is subject to major laws, as Newton had shown a century earlier and as had been accepted as the foundation and touch-stone of all of the Enlightenment thought. Thus, one of the major tasks of history is from henceforward to act as guide in creating and predicting the future. For,

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[71] Ibid., p. 52.

> If man can, with almost complete assurance, predict phenomena when he knows their laws, and if, even when he does not, he can still, with great expectation of success, forecast the future on the basis of his experience of the past, why, then, should it be regarded as a fantastic undertaking to sketch, with some pretence of truth, the future destiny of man on the basis of his history?[72]

The last part of Condorcet's Sketch (tenth stage) was devoted to such predictions in which he is amazingly accurate. The ultimate perfectibility of man is inevitable, unrestrained, and limitless; it can never be retrogressive. But man must no longer depend on "superstition, prejudice, and authority." He must work in pure science, experimentation, calculation. Condorcet is not disturbed by the presence of evil, which it will eventually be possible to specify with almost mathematical precision. The only lesson learned from crimes is that they are committed by christians, thus disproving the utility of religions.

In Condorcet we see perhaps the first fruits (or, from another point of view, the apogee) of the movement toward freedom from religious restriction in intellectual endeavors. Man's history, freed from biblical interpretations, is simply the story of continuous, irreversible, and inevitable progress and betterment, achieved through a more and more refined use of science and scientific tools. Its goal is the ultimate perfection of man, the eventual abolition (or nearly so) of death and illness, the reign of peace and tranquility among nations. This is indeed a long distance from the world-view of the primitive christian community, the cyclic doctrines of archaic and hellenistic man, and the more developed Augustinian philosophy of history. It represents a new phase in man's view of himself and his history.

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[72] Ibid., p. 57.

Yet the battle was not so easily won. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries by no means fully accepted Condorcet. As we shall attempt to demonstrate, the history of world-views in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries represents an attempt to create somehow an idea-system which will answer the needs of a new society in the making.

The nineteenth century

An excellent example of this curious melange of the traditionally christian and the new scientifically secular are the works of Auguste Comte (1790-1857).[73]

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[73] Cf. Auguste Comte, The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte, trans. H. Martineau (2 vols.; 3rd ed.; London, 1893).

In his The Positive Philosophy, Comte discovers and describes the laws which govern society and human history. He begins with the assumption of the progressive course of human events:

> In order to understand the true value and character of the Positive Philosophy, we must take a brief general view of the progressive course of the human mind, regarded as a whole; for no conception can be understood than through its history.[74]

The law which Comte discovers is a threefold passage of each branch of our knowledge, from the theological (or fictitious) stage to the metaphysical (or abstract), culminating in the scientific (or positive).

> The first is the necessary point of departure of the human understanding; and the third is its fixed and definite stage. The second is merely a state of transition.[75]

Each stage reaches a type of perfection or culmination. The theological when it arrives at monotheism; the metaphysical when nature becomes the substitute and basis for all phenomena; the scientific, when all phenomena can be explained by one fact, for example, gravitation. The essence therefore of Comte's positive philsophy is the search for laws, not causes. Once they are found, they are to be reduced to the smallest possible number. "Our real business is to analyse accurately the circumstance of phenomena, and to connect them by the natural relations of succession and resemblance."[76]

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[74] Quoted in Gardiner, p. 75.

[75] *Ibid.*

What is most obvious to Comte and to those upon whom he has made an impact (and their number was very great in the nineteenth century) is the linear progression from primitive to advanced stages. All were agreed that nineteenth century men were ready to discard theological and metaphysical explanations and to embark on the positive stage of human history. But such a progression was limited by moral and political confusion, brought to a climax by several centuries of revolutionary fervor and an undue emphasis on individual rights, abstract liberty and equality. To counteract these forces there was needed a new conception or a new accentuation of the force of order and stability. These forces are recognized in the Roman Catholic institution and Comte affirms that "we have only to follow its lead in reconstructing the same system on a better foundation."[77] Comte approves of the Church's democratic procedure of papal elections; its spiritual authority as distinct from secular authority; its cosmopolitanism or universal viewpoint; its insistence on personal virtue not simply as a matter of providence but of humility;

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[76] _Ibid_., p. 76. [77] Lowith, p. 75.

its appreciation of the true values of family life; its upgrading of the condition of woman; its emphasis on brotherhood and charity. Indeed, only in christianity is the idea of a universal history as inspired by Augustine made possible. Sad, however, is the situation of the present stage of christianity, divided as it is by the negative forces of the Reformation which, creating nothing but a vacuum, results in unbridled individualism culminating in the revolutionary spirit.

Comte's solution for a better world in which progress could now continue in a scientific spirit was to adopt the Roman Catholic "system" while rejecting its theological trusses. Progress and providence were incompatible for Comte; but with the idea of order and hierarchy, progress toward a better future was not only possible, but inevitable.

The Positive Philosophy thus represents a further step in the evolution of Western world-views. Accepting the separation of secular and sacred already begun by Voltaire and complete in Condorcet, he was able to move a step further in an attempt to integrate science and the Catholic "system," that is, order and hierarchy, into a new type of philosophy of history, based now not on the workings of Providence nor even yet on the free working-out of individual liberties, but following the inherent laws of social development which were there but for reason to discover them. Mankind, following these laws could not help but progress toward an unlimited future, which, although less flamboyant and more moderate than Condorcet's, still preserved the general spirit of hope and enthusiasm which characterized the philosophies of history after the Revolution.

A contemporary of Comte, Georg Hegel (1770-1831) surpassed him in the influence he had upon other minds, not only in the nineteenth but in the twentieth century as well. It is to his Philosophy of History that we may look for his unique contribution to the evolution of major world-views.

Like so many of his predecessors, Hegel looked out upon the panorama of human history only to discover turmoil, sin, suffering, evil, seething chaos. He could not believe, like archaic man, that no meaning can be found therein; nor like Eastern thought that such change ought to be transcended. Instead, Hegel asked, "But even regarding history as the slaughter-bench at which the happiness of peoples, the wisdom of the saints, and the virtue of individuals have been victimized--the question necessarily arises: to what final aim these enormous sacrifices have been offered?"[78] Hegel rejected cyclic theories and mute acceptance of non-understanding of the processes of history as oriental concepts. The true occidental way is the way of reason; it is reason which governs universal history. Now this reason is no other than Divine Providence. But not the Providence which had hitherto been taught, which is the "peddler's view." In order to make progress, we must understand the movement of history. It is not enough to say that history is guided by Providence, but that we are unable to understand or to see the pattern.

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[78] Hegel, cited by Lowith, p. 53.

> It must be observed at the outset, that the phenomenon we investigate--Universal History--belongs to the realm of Spirit.[79]

> The essence of Spirit is Freedom. . . . Freedom is the sole truth of Spirit. . . . The question of the means by which Freedom develops itself to a World, conducts us to the phenomenon of History itself. . . . The vast congeries of volitions, interests and activities, constitute the instruments and means of the World-Spirit for attaining its object. . . . Reason governs the world, and has consequently governed its history.[80]

Since Reason governs the world, the present state of the world, of history, is the current expression of Reason. And the truly good, the true Reason "in its most concrete form, is God. God governs the world;

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[79] Georg Hegel, The Philosophy of History, trans. J. Sibree (rev. ed.; New York: Wiley Book Co., 1944), cited in Gardiner, pp. 60-61.

[80] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

the actual working of his government--the carrying out of his plan--is the History of the World."[81] Thus, a Hegelian philosophy of history is "a justification of the ways of God . . . so that the ill that is found in the world may be comprehended and the thinking Spirit reconciled with the fact of the existence of evil."[82]

But what bears emphasis is the dynamic value which Hegel placed on the present--an emphasis not seen since the days of the primitive christians. For Hegel, all that is real is rational; thus "the real world is as it ought to be." The work of the individual is to the Spirit in striving for the realizing of its own Ideal Being. He does this by cooperating with the realization of the Spirit on earth, the State. The mechanism by which Spirit works itself out in history is Hegel's famous dialectic. Spirit makes itself actually what it always was potentially.[83] Spirit is thus always at war with itself; it is itself its own greatest obstacle. But the transformation of Spirit, or rather, each successive transformation, is not simply another reappearance of the same stage of Spirit. The new

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[81] _Ibid._, p. 66.

[82] Hegel, cited by Lowith, p. 55.

[83] Hegel, _Philosophy of History_, _passim_.

Spirit "comes forth exalted, glorified, a purer spirit. It certainly makes war upon itself--consumes its own existence; but in this very destruction it works up that existence into a new form, and each successive phase becomes in its turn a material, working on which it exalts itself to a new grade."[84]

Marx

Another attempt at coming to grips with the realities of the nineteenth century, while at the same time not abandoning the centuries of tradition behind him, this time infinitely more painstaking and scientific than any which had gone before, was made by Karl Marx (1818-1883).

Just as all creators of a new idea-system, Marx wished to begin with actual concrete facts. "The premises," he asserted, "from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas. . . . they are the real individuals, their activity and their material conditions of life, including those which they find already in existence and those produced by their own activity."[85] Marx accepts the Hegelian dialectic, but as reinterpreted by Ludwig Feuerbach, who saw in its development not the unfolding of Spirit, but the alienation of man from himself.[86] Instead of man's progressive growth into the superman (Übermensch), he declines into the state of non-man (Unmensch).

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[84] Cited in Gardiner, p. 71.

[85] Karl Marx, "The German Ideology" from T. B. Bottomore and M. Rubel, Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy (London: Watts, n.d.), cited in Gardiner, p. 126.

First, Marx asked, what it is that distinguishes men from animals:

> Man can be distinguished from animals . . . as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence. . . . From this starting point, [this conception of history] explains all the different theoretical productions and forms of consciousness, religion, philosophy, ethics . . . the formation of ideas from material practice. . . . It shows that circumstances make men just as much as men make circumstances.[87]

It is human labor which is the secret of human history; in labor man creates himself and his history. Only when this labor is directed toward purposefully channelling natural forces is it in man's interests. Now the fact which was most obvious for Marx was that nineteenth-century human labor was evidently not in man's interest. "Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to the division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character."[88] The proletarian is the non-man, the alienated man, alienated from nature, alienated from himself. Bourgeois society, that creation of the nineteenth century, thus spawns its own destruction in its giving birth to the proletariat. For when man alienates himself he also produces, in dialectic fashion, the antithesis of alienated man: the revolutionary man.

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[86] Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, trans. George Eliot (New York: Harper, 1957).

[87] Marx, quoted in Gardiner, pp. 126-27.

[88] Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto, trans. Samuel Moore (Chicago: Regnery, 1965), p. 27.

> Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class.
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> . . . .
>
> What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.[89]

The specifics of Marx's philosophy of history beyond this point are well known: Since "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class-struggles" the past, the present, and the future are interpreted according to this dialectic. The past is seen and interpreted through the prevailing systems of production: free man and slave, patrician and plebeian, and the like, until the nineteenth century when class divisions are sharpest between the bourgeois and the proletariat. By the abolition of private property, the elimination of the subsistence wage and the unjust theory of surplus value, and finally, by a real revolution in the minds of men, so that men would no longer speak the language of money and other material relationships and would permit personal qualities and inclinations to govern their lives[90]--by all this, a new stage could be reached in human history. This new stage in which the needs of each would be provided by the labor of all, and in accordance with each one's necessities, would finally heal the alienation between man and himself and between man and nature.

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[89] *Ibid.*, pp. 89 ff.

The basis for Marx's philosophy of history is man's concern for man, an attempt to define man, to place him within nature but at the same time to withhold him from nature.[91] Marx's man marches toward the future just as surely and inevitably as does Condorcet's, Comte's, and Hegel's. But his feet touch the ground more surely, even though his vision may be narrow and more myopic.

The Skeptics

A fourth school may be detected, although it has the character of an antischool. It is the school of the cynics and skeptics, who flourish today especially among professional historians. In a vigorous attempt to apply scientific methods to the study and writing of history, the professional historian (and many others) can heap nothing but ridicule on the belief that one can follow a thread through human history. Thus, A. L. Rowse:

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[90] Cf. Marck Fritzhard, "Marx's Ideal of Man," *Socialist Humanism: An International Symposium*, ed. Erich Fromm (New York: Doubleday, 1965), p. 163.

[91] Cf. *ibid.*, for several explanations of this.

> There is, of course, no *one* rhythm or *one* plot in history. To suppose that there is, or even to expect it and be disappointed, is a relic of the religious view of the universe.[92]

And again, "To impose a thesis upon the facts is antithetical to the true nature of history; the true historian distrusts and eschews it."[93] And finally, "The laws of history, then, are the nature of statistical generalizations: in dealing with one individual little calculation is possible; in dealing with a great number, one may even draw graphs, as in economics--provided one takes one's graphs with a pinch of common sense."[94] There is, of course, much truth to what Rowse and others have to say; for example, no one would wish to *impose* (or at least to admit to it) a thesis on historical fact. But it is precisely the opposite which the philosophers of history wish to do. Their belief is that they have constructed a world-view out of the facts and activities they have investigated. Their method is, at least in theory, a posteriori.[95] [This is not so clear in the christian tradition where revelation--the Bible--is made the key and measure of world history. Thus for the christian, a set of principles is already given for interpretations. Nevertheless, the christian philosopher of history believes that there is nothing more obvious than the fact that world history in itself manifests God's providence, although it does not give the final rule, the intrinsic key to its understanding--something God alone can provide. Thus the christian philosophy of history is a posteriori and a priori--making it an object of suspicion by those who wish to remain purely "scientific" in their methods.] And even the most enthusiastic of history systematizers like Condorcet, Spengler, or Toynbee would allow for even more than a pinch of common sense in interpreting the patterns of history.

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[92] A. L. Rowse, *The Use of History* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), p. 20.

[93] *Ibid*., p. 58.

[94] *Ibid*., p. 76.

There is no need for investigating what may here be a question of semantics--the meaning of the word "history." The point is that among professional historians, there is very little interest, if indeed any at all, in speculative philosophy of history, in an interpretation of the facts which they present. And if such exists, then it belongs to the realm of philosophy and metaphysics and has nothing whatsoever to do with the historian. However, many professional historians--and many, many other intellectuals in the contemporary world--believe there is no such valid interpretation, and smile with a gentle (or not so gentle, as in the case of the British) pity on those benighted souls who still are lost in the black forests of ontological thought.

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[95] W. H. Walsh, Philosophy of History: An Introduction (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1951).

Building a New Idea-System

Origin

What are the origins of man and the cosmos he knows? The how part of this basic question on man's origins has not been easily handled. But the when part seems to have been a simpler problem. "In illo tempore" was archaic man's answer. This is what Mircea Eliade has called "exemplar history."[96] As we have seen, in archaic man's attempt to escape from the everlasting cycles of history, he tried to abolish history by myth-creation. Myth is archaic man's explanation for the way things are now; it is his attempt to grasp at what is real in the face of what he sees every day around him.[97] Thus, sexual intercourse, the planting of the fields in spring, building a boat--all of these are copies of the cosmogonic model of creation.[98]

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[96] Cf. Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion.

Now the same may be said for Hindu and classical man's thoughts, making exchanges and modifications for Visnu and Venus, and recognizing that in a single sentence we are compressing several hundred generations of thought and development. Nevertheless, it remains true that until the arrival of christianity and at a very late date, indeed, in consideration of the thousands of years of human thought which preceded it, the posing of the question of man's origins and its answer was always done in terms of the illud tempus.

There is, in actuality, little difference in the story of man's origins given in the Old Testament, as christian inheritance from the Jews, and that of archaic, Hindu, and classical man.[99] What is different however is the significance given to the story. For the christian, whose concept of time was radically changed by the Christ-event, the creation was but the prelude to that central event, the coming of Christ, for the salvation of man. The creation of the universe remained outside of historical time as such, but there was no ambiguity about the special creation of man by Jahwe and this was the beginning of time. The creation story of Adam and Eve as the first moment of time was strengthened by the chronologies given later in Genesis[100] and then in Matthew[101] which were attempts to show the relation of contemporary man with his first parents. So certain were christians of the genesis story and of its temporal significance that even Bossuet could date his events from the year one--which was that of the creation of Adam and Eve.[102] For example, "About the 3000th year of the world, the 488th from the departure out of Egypt, and to adjust the times of sacred history with those of

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[97] Ibid., p. 410.

[98] Cf. Eliade's example of his cosmogonic egg in ibid.

[99] For further reading on Genesis and its current interpretations, cf. Ignatius Hunt, The Book of Genesis (New York: Paulist Press, 1960); Charles Hauret, Beginnings; Genesis and Modern Science (Dubuque: Priory Press, 1964); Bruce Vawter, A Path through Genesis (New

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York: Sheed & Ward, 1956); Jean de Fraine, The Bible and the Origin of Man (New York: Desclee, 1962); Pierre Schoonenberg, God's World in the Making (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1966); Robert T. Francoeur, Perspectives in Evolution (New York: Helicon, 1965).

[100] For example, Gen. 10:1-32.

[101] Matt. 1:1-16.

[102] Cf. Bossuet, cited by Lowith, p. 139.

the profane, 100 years after the taking of Troy, 250 before the foundation of Rome, and 1000 years before Jesus Christ, did Solomon finish that stupendous edifice." But even Bossuet was not quite certain whether the correct date for creation was 4004 or 4963. He was certain, however, that it was God who created man out of the slime of the earth, and Eve from Adam's rib. Thus we may be adequately safe in assuming that the creation story, or more correctly, the story of man's creation, remained essentially the same in its general pattern, but that with christianity its significance changed from the supra-historical, supra-temporal fact of myth into a temporal beginning, while the creation of the universe remained on the level of myth throughout.

The world-views we have studied, at least until the nineteenth century, did little to change the answer to the question of man's origins. Only Darwin, with his biological synthesis, could shake what was until the end of the nineteenth century, the shared conviction (at least unconsciously, for it must be admitted that most Enlightenment intellectuals could hardly be less concerned with the problem, so intent were they on changing the present toward the future) of the Western world. It was only with the coming of the concept of evolution that an important attack was made.

Already in the eighteenth and quite widely in the nineteenth century, the concept of 4004 as the date of the creation of the universe was openly disputed as scientific evidence began to accumulate concerning the actual antiquity of the earth and celestial bodies. Any intellectual worth his salt in the nineteenth century would hardly have dared to express his opinion as to an exact date for the cosmos-creation, except that he was certain it could not have been a mere four millenia ago. The geological, astronomical facts helped weaken a faith which was, until as recently as Bossuet, unshakable.

With Darwin, a veritable hurricane of doubt was loosed upon the intellectual world. Not only did Darwin provide unequivocal evidence that species did not appear full-blown in time, that they evolved, but also he did not dare to exclude men from his general principles.[103] The conclusions, even if Darwin or anyone else had not stated them, were obvious. Either Darwin and all his evidence were wrong, or Genesis was. No longer could a thinking man accept the Genesis story on its face value, nor reckon the beginning of time with Adam and Eve.

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[103] Cf. John Greene, The Death of Adam: Evolution and Its Impact on Western Thought (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1959); Gertrude Himmelfarb, Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution (Garden City: Doubleday, 1959); and A Century of Darwin, ed. S. A. Barnett (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958).

Indeed, he did not know whether there was an Adam and Eve. And with the coming of the twentieth century and the burgeoning science of paleontology, he could not even afford himself the luxury of doubt. Evidence was mounting from day to day that the human species could be dated back one or two million years, and that even homo sapiens or modern-type man as we know him today had inhabited the earth for at least thirty-five thousand years. The beginnings of life were traced in terms of billions of years and the origins of the universe itself in even greater astronomical figures.

Some twenty or thirty years ago, a twentieth-century intellectual could do one of several things: he could choose sides, that is, he could merely refuse scientific evidence (and this was done in many cases) in favor of his religiously founded world-view; or he could reject the religious world-view in favor of scientific evidence. Secondly, he could hope to live a compromise, that is hold on to his religious world-view, suspending its answer to the question on human origins, and listen to scientific facts where they were overwhelming in their arguments.

Now the obvious problem in any one of these choices is that they all compromise the world-view. In the first (rejection of scientific evidence) the world-view is enfeebled by a dismissal of what at least contemporaries regard as truthful reality. In the second, the world-view itself is rejected in favor of only a single part of another world-view, namely, an answer to human origins. And the third, perhaps the most commonly accepted path, is half-hearted in both directions and proves to lead dangerously close to a fatal cynicism.[104]

Today, at least in the Roman Catholic tendency, it has become almost universally acceptable to approve the teachings of evolution; but only after a long struggle and the recognition of the value inherent in the work of Bultmann and his school. Thus Catholic theology, in its most progressive forms, may hold today that scientific evidence in no way contradicts the biblical story which was to have a religious meaning only and was not to represent a scientific interpretation of man's origins. This in no way weakens the actuality of the creation story, for the religious interpretation is as valid as the scientific. Nevertheless, even among the "progressive" Catholics, the doctrine of the immediate creation of the human soul (that is, a once-for-all event at a given time) is not rejected and seldom questioned. And due to a papal document (Humani Generis, 1950), the teaching on the reality of monogenism is strictly upheld. Even now, then at least for the Catholic intellectual, no recognized solution is available by which he can reconcile a thorough-going scientific evolution and his christian world-view.

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[104] Although there have been some recent attempts. Cf. for example, Robert North, S.J., Teilhard and the Creation of the Soul (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1967); also, Smulders, The Design of Teilhard de Chardin, pp. 60-85.

Destiny

At the opposite end of time arises the question of destiny. Where is man going? Or, is he going anywhere? There is no need to spend a considerable amount of space on archaic man's answer here. There simply was no goal. History and time inscribed a circle. Man's history and man's time were not even real. Man's goal, if we may speak of it as such, was to escape the circle of reality--and even that was not a practical reality because the boddhisattva was expected to sacrifice his bliss until all could gain it, and this would never happen. Or he might escape the circle by participation in mythical rites which brought time and reality into his daily life.

Again, the radical break comes with christianity which indeed destroys the cyclical concept with its notion of goal-directedness. The christian thrust has a double significance. Not only does it provide a goal for man--heavenly bliss, union with the God of creation through love--but it also infallibly assures this salvation because the decisive victory over the forces of evil has already been won in the Death and Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Christianity here is the direct opposite of classical, oriental, and archaic cyclicism. In the latter, man is taken up into participation in the god-life. In the former it is God himself who, remaining God yet becoming man, immerses himself into man's reality and human history. And by his living, his dying, and his resurrection, he assures man of meaning in his life, by not simply promising, but insuring man's final participation in an endless time of union with him.

We have already examined the nature of the end-times and the tension which developed because of the "already-here" but "not-yet" in christian eschatological thinking. It remains to emphasize again the subtle accent introduced in the years after the first century[105] and holding sway in christian thought until today. Since the Parousia is beyond time and matter only for God's knowledge, and since God guides events by an invisible hand, there is little man can do to direct himself to his own goal. Or, more accurately, his real goal is a spiritual, a religious one. And we at once see the real impact of Augustine's two cities: the real christian has little right to be terribly concerned about the terrestrial city or its history. He is "not of this world" where all is vanity. And Tertullian's "what does Athens have to do with Jerusalem" comes home to us with all its implications of a brutal separation of the christian from the non-christian or secular world.

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[105] Jurgen Moltmann suggests Marcion (fl. mid-second century) as one of the sources of this dilution. Cf. "The Category 'Novum' in Christian Theology" presented at the John XXIII Institute: The Future as the Presence of Shared Hope, Saint Xavier College, Chicago, Ill., October 27-29, 1967.

This was the doctrine against which the proponents of the secular progress rallied. For what in fact has been the essential element in the world-view offered by man from Vico through Marx is that man is in control of his own future, that history is his to be made. The doctrine was not so openly stated by Vico and Hegel who, as Lowith suggests, managed to quietly secularize providence and philosophize it into Vico's "invisible hand" or Hegel's "cunning of reason." But the antipathy was blatant in Voltaire, Condorcet, Comte, and Marx.

The success of the Marxist revolutions, as well as the industrial and technological revolutions which have swept and continue to sweep over the world, have reinforced the belief in human control over human destiny. The contemporary intellectual thus, on this second crucial question, is placed again in a dilemma: How to save the religious world-view and at the same time accept what seems to be a major reality before him --man's control over his own future. Or, in another way: How is it that man can control his own destiny and yet remain a child of God and subject to him. Freud's attempt at an answer is not very encouraging. Man is seen to be the master of his own destiny, but he is at the same time its victim. For in creating civilizations and conquering the cosmos, he is merely attempting to escape the guilt which lies upon him from the primal days of origin and the awful parricide which is Freud's original sin. Freud's solution is stoic[106] and yet modern man is hardly of the stoic type, and on this question, as on the first, he prefers a clear answer, a whole-hearted commitment, rather than an agonizing and precarious balance.[107]

Nature

The rest of the questions which thematize the history of idea-systems all concern the in-between time, that is, between the origins and the end. One of these, and one of the most important, is man's relation to nature. Where does man belong in nature? Or, is man beyond nature? Precisely how are man and nature related?

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[106] Rieff, pp. 23 ff.

[107] On this question Spengler becomes similarly a stoic. Man ought to accept his situation in the period of decline. Toynbee sees hope in the emergence of a new world religion, amalgamating the best of the major contemporary universal religions.

Here again archaic, oriental, and classical cultures are all in accord in their answer: Man lives in harmony with nature, is indeed a part of it, and communicates with it by what Levy-Bruhl has called _participation mystique_.[108] Surrounded by nature, man cannot avoid it. Nothing is clearer to him but that there is a continual, productive interrelationship between himself and the things of nature. Not only the great objects of nature--the sun, the moon, the great oceans--are important in determining his life and in whose reality he in some way participated, but stones, groves of trees, a bush, springs, and plants--all these helped to make his life understandable. The possibilities of intercommunication and sharing of the same life sources are easily seen in the doctrine of reincarnation, fertility rites, harvest festivals, sacrifices, and the like. The Hindu representations of gods and goddesses in the form of man or animals have not only a symbolic meaning, but manifest the true belief in the unity of all living and nonliving forms of nature. The universe was indeed a whole.

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[108] Cf. Levy-Bruhl, _La participation mystique_ (Paris, 1940).

Again in this realm christianity introduced a new idea, new perspective. And again the tradition has its roots in the judaic scriptures. For it is in the very third chapter of Genesis that a radical break with nature occurs. At first, men and nature dwelt together in a state of perfect equilibrium and harmony.[109] This is one of the essential meanings of the paradise story. With the temptation of the serpent and the eating of the forbidden fruit, the harmony was ruptured.[110] Since the fall, according to the judaic-christian tradition, a disharmony exists between man and nature, a disharmony coming from man's original sin.

The strict monotheism of the judaic tradition also emphasized the christian's relation to nature. His God was above all gods; all other gods were "empty and vain." They were, as Moses said, "no-gods," or "demons." That is, they really did not exist, or if they did, they were subject to the one true God. It was God who controlled the heavens; by praying to God, nature was controlled and manipulated. Thus the plagues, which came from God; thus God's feeding of the chosen people in the desert. All was attributed to the one God, who alone controlled man and nature alike for he alone transcended them.

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[109] Gen. 2.

[110] "Then the eyes of both were opened, and they realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings" (Gen. 3:7). Contrast this with the author's statement shortly before the fall: "Both the man and his wife were naked, but they felt no shame" (Gen. 2:25). Thus says God, "Cursed be the ground because of you; in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life" (Gen. 2:17).

In the New Testament there is no want of manifestations of the same truth, this time the divine powers being attributed to Jesus of Nazareth. Thus he walks upon the waters, controls the storms, multiplies food, and greatest of all, conquers death by his resurrection. The resurrection was indeed the final vanquishing of the disharmony in nature caused by the first fall. Thus Christ is the "second Adam" who restored the initial harmony by his death and resurrection.[111]

But for Paul it was not only because of the resurrection that Christ holds the central position both for man and for nature. It is by reason of his identification as Son of God that Christ's redemptive and healing work has its power.[112] Just as the work of creation was the task of the trinitarian God, so too the work of redemption or restoration; the first being attributed to the Father; the second to the Son. The ideal future is described by John in his final revelation. In the new Jerusalem, the eschatological paradise will be a

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[111] "For we know that Christ, having risen from the dead, dies now no more, death shall no longer have dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9).

[112] "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For in him were created

> river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the city streets, on both sides of the river, was the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit according to each month, and the leaves for the healing of the nations. . . . And night shall be no more, and they shall have no need of light of lamp, or light of sun for the Lord God will shed light upon them; and they shall reign forever.[113]

But the clarity of this vision was not kept before the minds of later christians. Rather there was an emphasis on the distinction between man and nature, and often an emphasis on the wickedness of nature and

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all things in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible. . . . All things have been created through and unto him, and he is before all creatures, and in him all things hold together" (Col. 1:15).

[113] Apoc. 22:1-5. The Old Testament Isaias, however, described even more clearly the end of the Man-Nature disharmony: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. The calf and the lion and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them. The calf and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall rest together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp; and the weaned child shall thrust his hand into the den of the basilisk. They shall not hurt, nor shall they kill in all my holy mountain, for the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the covering waters of the sea" (Isaias 11:6-9).

the "natural" element in man, the body. The horror of John's triple concupiscence (lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life)[114] and the literal unqualified acceptance of his words (and others like them): "Do not love the world, or the things that are in the world. If anyone love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,"[115] coupled with the historical development of monachism, occidental priestly celibacy, Aristotelianism, exaggerated hagiography, Manichaeanism, Augustinianism, anti-"paganism," and countless other developments--all this darkened and perhaps eliminated the belief in a kind of participation mystique between man and nature. It is thus easy to understand that with a mentality based on the anti-world, anti-nature elements in a masterpiece like the Flemish Imitation of Christ (De Contemptu Mundi) and committed wholeheartedly to the Aristotelian hylomorphism as transmitted by Aquinas and the later scholastics, the scientific revolution caught christians off guard. Convinced of the radical separation of man from nature, and persuaded as well of the intrinsic evil in nature as opposed to the goodness of the saved soul, it would be naturally difficult for a christian to accept a theory like Darwin's which presumed to treat all life as a whole.[116] For not only were the city of God and the earthly city to be kept apart, at least in principle, but these two cities of men had nothing to do with nature as such.

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[114] I John 2:16.

[115] I John 2:15.

Again, the reaction came with the secular progress thrust which saw the mistake but did not quite know how adequately to correct it. In rejecting the traditional christian idea-system as a whole, they, so to speak, burned down the barn to catch the mice. For Voltaire, Condorcet, Comte, progress into a gradual dissolution of nature's power over man would be achieved through reason, through education.[117] The apocalyptic descriptions of Isaias and of John became for the progressists descriptions of what man could and eventually would achieve here on earth, given the time and the necessary facilities. The same was true for Marx, save that the means for progress were not so much educative, but lay in the realm of the continuing class struggle until its very finish when each would have according to his need.[118]

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[116] These perspectives were further developed and reenforced by Calvin and his teachings, resulting in a radical confusion in ethics. "Honesty is the best policy"--because it pays, increases one's wealth, and thus assures salvation.

[117] Rousseau and the Romantics chose to ignore the teaching of the Fall and of original sin, and asserted instead the natural goodness of man. Progress could be achieved only by the contrary of the Encyclopedists' solution: a return to nature, that is, to simplicity. What the Romantics rightly recognized was the unhealthiness and unreality about a human existence cut off, at least conceptually, from the participation mystique.

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[118] It might be profitable to discuss here at some length what has been the real contribution of marxism on this point. Marx accepted Hegel only after going through the "brook of fire." Nothing was clearer to Hegel (and to Spengler for that matter) than the distinction between history and nature. Human history had nothing whatsoever to do with nature. Nature was the realm of extension, fixed laws and causal knowledge. Whereas Spirit, history, the human, was the realm of life, direction, destiny, the unique fact. Knowledge of man and knowledge of nature were two incompatible terms. As Spengler remarks: "Man-knowing and Nature-knowing are in essence entirely incapable of being compared." And he continues bitterly, "the whole nineteenth century was at great pains to abolish the frontier between Nature and History in favour of the former" (Spengler, I, 151). Hegel however did not. He emphasized this basic incompatibility and insisted on the value of the world of the Spirit over that of nature. Thus history became the unfolding of the universal Spirit. But through Feuerbach and his theory of man's alienation, Marx recognized that Hegel was correct in his dialectical theory, yet wrong in the situs in which it operated. If all was change and motion, then the dialectic was primarily a movement of matter, for only there was motion possible. With idealism discredited, Marx proceeded (especially in his earlier essays) to show how men's history follows the history of nature. He inserted man into nature, healing what had been a breach (if not in theory then at least in practice) created by the christian doctrine of original sin.

However, neither Marx nor Engels was so naive as to equate human and natural history. Engels in Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy (New York: International Publishers, 1941), pp. 48 ff., rightly makes a careful distinction. Nature is seen to be an intersection of blind forces--efficient and determined, but nevertheless unseeing and unconscious agents. Nothing, he says, is attained in nature as a consciously desired aim. It would be absurd (and Engels is quick to realize this), however, to say the same for human history. Little happens in human society which is not the

No one will deny the parallels between the marxist and the christian doctrines. In the end, the differences on this question are accents and emphases. For the two, the correct state of things is man's free and active participation in nature, of which man is an integral part. For both, something has caused a disruption of this original harmony. For both, this harmony will be refound. But here the differences become greater. In christianity, harmony has already been established in principle at Good Friday and Easter Sunday. In marxism the harmony is yet to be accomplished.

The twentieth-century intellectual has been attuned to scientific research and conclusions long enough

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product of a desired goal. This distinction does not destroy the marxist belief in man as a part of the material universe; that he, as well as nature, is determined by nature's dialectical laws; that his only freedom is the freedom obtained from the knowledge of these laws. For man's free determination of means to end is only apparent. From the human point of view man appears to be thus free in the sense of the actual determination of nature. But on nature's side, from the cosmic perspective, man's freedom is illusory, subsumed under the inevitable progress of the laws of dialectic: thesis, antithesis, synthesis. Even chance events are thus governed by the same hidden, inner, implacable laws of nature. Private property, money economy, the enslavement of the proletariat, the iron law of wages--all these help to remove man from his place in nature, alienate him, so that he does not know himself. However, such alienation in its extreme will generate its own counterforce, and through this same dehumanized proletariat will rise the leaders of tomorrow's revolution, the metaphysical result of which will be a reinsertion of man into nature and the reestablishment of the primeval harmony.

to no longer doubt that he is a part, and an integral one, of nature, that he operates under much the same laws as the rest of nature, and that the freedom which in the past he thought was so uniquely his own has proved to be ephemeral, illusory, or at most, greatly diminished.

Yet, as an urban dweller and as creator (if not yet victim) of the technological civilization, he is more than ever aware, despite his intellectual sophistication, of his position in rapport with nature. So divorced is he from actual contact with the things of nature, and so surrounded by objects of his own creation, he has difficulty in understanding what nature is at all, except through a highly rationalized version of the meaning of natural laws and scientific systems. Coupled with this actual physical and psychological state is his traditional belief in a rupture between man and nature, a breach which occurred either in the distant past or in myth if he is a christian, or in the economic past if he is a marxist. So that contemporary man stands on this fundamental question, as with the others, in a state of tension and schizophrenia. The world-views until now do not seem to be able to provide an answer which can satisfy contemporary man.

Nor is he easily satisfied today by the homologue of the man-nature question, that is the question of God. Since this study in no way purports to be a theological tract we have only a few points to make here. For perhaps the God-question is better posed in a philosophy of history not as whether or not a god exists, but who, or what, is that power, that force behind history and events. Mircea Eliade, in beginning his study of comparative religion, shows the immense difficulties in trying to discover what is common in hierophanies. "We have to deal," he says

> with a vast and ill-assorted mass of material, with a Melanesian cosmogony myth or Brahman sacrifice having as much right to our consideration as the mystical writings of a St. Teresa or a Michiran, an Australian totem, a primitive initiation rite, the symbolism of the Borobudur temple, the ceremonial costumes and dances of a Siberian shaman, the sacred stones to be found in so many places, agricultural ceremonies, the myths and rites of the Great Goddesses, the enthroning of an ancient king or the superstitions attaching to precious stones.[119]

Furthermore, all of these are to be interpreted in their historical circumstances, in their becoming. Obviously, the study of comparative religion, of the concept of the sacred and the profane through the ages of man, is simply in its infancy.

However, let us boldly make some generalizations to this account based on what we already have seen in our brief history of idea-systems. We can safely conclude that running through all the philosophies of history is what we may call a "mystique," or in Bergsonian terms, an "elan." If for archaic, Indic and classical man this mystique found its home on Mount Meru, Mount Olympus, or anywhere else, it was clearly seen to be beyond "time," beyond history. To it was attributed the moving force behind the Wheel of Time, the true reality behind the world of appearances, the Tao, the Atman, Yuan. Escape or salvation from the Wheel of Time came through the identification with the mystique: either through repetition of feats or events which happened in illo tempore, and thus made the mystique burst out into the present, or in meditation on the mystique itself and an ignoring of the present world as the world of the unreal. The mystique was better, higher, purer, more real, the essential.

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[119] Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion, p. 2.

This sense was not lost in christianity. Rather was it fortified by the doctrine of the incarnation, in which the Real (God-Jahwe) broke the barrier between the two worlds by sending his son as redeemer. The christians had already inherited a long tradition of familiarity with the mystique in the Hebrew story of salvation and the lives of the prophets of Israel. Indeed, one most important reaction was against what seemed to be the institutionalization of providence, or the mystical presence, in the Roman Church. Nor was the Protestant Reformation the last reaction. The Church, in what its opponents considered its false pretentions and its aggregation of human powers in the name of mystique, was the prime target for enlightenment thinkers, especially for Voltaire, who can be thanked or blamed for a rather thorough discrediting of the institutionalizing Church. There are still villifications in Condorcet at the end of the century. But by the time of Comte, the Church is praised for its hierarchical organization and its efficiency while its doctrine as mediator between man and the mystique is simply ignored. In Hegel the mystique itself is transferred to reason, the working of the Spirit; and in Marx, it becomes incarnate in the proletariat. In the twentieth century, the mystique is hardly lost. The divine is found in the machine, in a kind of vague sense of overriding independent progress which presides over the development of human history, in the superego, in Destiny. On the other hand, there is a group whose roots go back to Nietzsche and perhaps earlier, who in astonishment and some pain, proclaim the final death of the mystique, of the divinity, and lapse into a stoic anguish until his return.

The sense of the absolute collapsed before the invasion of the revolution of relativity, the analytical frame of mind, the loss of the sense of mystery, the divorce from nature. Some of its attributes modern man transfers to the cause of science, to progress or to other movements in which he believes. But the contemporary intellectual is too much aware of retrograde forces to place the same kind of faith in science or in progress or in the machine or in money as his forebears placed in Jahwe, God, Tao, or Jove. And thus the God-problem remains as acutely unsettled as the question of man's origins and destiny and his relation to nature.

Evil

Too much aware of the retrograde forces, we said. It was in answer to the challenge of the problem of evil that certain philosophies of history were written in the first place--Augustine spurred on by the sack of Rome; Voltaire by the Lisbon earthquake; Marx by the tenements and squalor of bourgeois Europe; Freud by psychological sufferings.

Too much (perhaps far too much) has been written on the problem of evil and its attempted solutions in history for us to spend more than a moment's reflection here.[120] After the stoic attitude manifest in most primitive cultures and in the oriental and classical civilizations (physical and moral evil being either the effect of immersion in time or of the wrath of the gods --both of which were beyond the powers of mere mortals to control except by propitiatory offerings and ritual-- and then, surely, not always with success) christianity offered a fresher solution. Both physical and moral evil (sin) were the result of a primeval fall of the first parents. We have already seen how this fall introduced a rupture between man and nature. The awareness of the nakedness of Adam and Eve was the Genesis author's way of saying that from the fall stems moral evil also. And the first major event recorded after the expulsion from paradise was the murder of Abel by his jealous brother Cain. There is no need to emphasize the fact that all of the rest of the Old Testament is the story of how Jahwe fulfilled the promises made both Adam and then to Abraham, Noe and others of a reversal of this state of affairs by the sending of a redeemer. The New Testament records the life and teachings of the

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[120] Cf. for example, R. Jolivet, Le problème du mal d'après S. Augustine (Paris, 1936); C. Journet, The Meaning of Evil, trans. M. Barry (New York, 1963); Louis Lavelle, Evil and Suffering (New York: Macmillan, 1963); Jacques Maritain, St. Thomas and the Problem of Evil,

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trans. M. L. Andison (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1942); F. Petit, The Problem of Evil, trans. C. Williams (New York, 1959); Dietrich Von Hildebrand, The Nature of Good and Evil (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1952); W. Stuermann, The Divine Destroyer: A Theology of Good and Evil (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965).

redeemer, as well as his very redemptive act: death, resurrection, and ascension, by which the original situation, that is, perfect harmony between man and man, and man and nature, was righted in principle.

Coherent as this explanation was, there still existed a more profound question. That is, why would God punish those who were righteous? It was the same question which Voltaire posed after the Lisbon earthquake. In Job, we find the biblical response: Evil is permitted by God when he wills it. God asks Job: "Would you condemn me that you may be justified?"[121] Job's answer is classical, for it describes what the christian attitude has been to the mystery of evil:

> I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be hindered. I have dwelt with great things that I do not understand; things too wonderful for me, which I cannot know. I had heard of you by word of mouth, but now my eye has seen you. Therefore I disown what I have said, and repent in dust and ashes.[122]

Job's admission of failure to solve the ultimate question of evil was rewarded by his restoration to health and wealth. And so the christian faced the problems of every day: Why abnormal children? Why the sufferings of the innocent? Why the scourge of war? There was no satisfying answer, and one could only bow one's head in humble submission to the will of God, whose ways are inscrutable.

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[121] Job 40:8

[122] Job 42:2-6.

Such an answer is unacceptable to the twentieth-century mind. Contemporary man knows that there was a time when lightning and thunder were also considered the wrath of God and then proven to be but natural phenomena, dependent upon a stream of electrons. He is not convinced that he must bow before what might be only seemingly a mystery. Nevertheless he is acutely aware of the wickedness of himself and his fellows. After almost a century of calm and what appeared to be steady progress, he is astonished and horrified by Auschwitz, Dachau and Buchenwald, by Hiroshima and by Vietnam. Is the cause of such moral evil the price of the guilt carried around man's neck or rather in his subconscious, as a result of the original fall, or the original parricide? And can this weakness and ugliness ever be removed or overcome? Marx answered yes: with the advent of communism, man's nature would be changed and there would be no more wickedness. Christianity answered yes: when the merits of Christ were distributed in time through the building up of his Body and the end of time would finally arrive, the original fall would be redressed not only in principle, but for each and all and the elect would live in the New Jerusalem. The cyclicists said no: there was no salvation but in escape from the source of evil--time--and this was open to only a few. Accept reality as it is--anguish, anxiety, suffering are a part of being or becoming, part of the natural growth of the organism, humanity. Salvation lies in the acceptance of the facts.

It takes no more than a moment to realize contemporary man's dilemma before the problem of evil. His christian sense, enfeebled almost beyond recognition, his faustian inability to accept mere resignation, his promethean belief in his powers to control everything, and his impatience at what appears to be only a future dissolution of the problem,[123] he stands before a double choice: either he must accept resignation or the future solution. But the rewards of resignation are not sufficient to be a strong attraction. And the basis for future promises (that is, the story of an original fall or the success of the proletariat--especially the latter as it emerges more and more quickly into a kind of neutralized, nonrevolutionary bourgeoisie) does not seem convincing enough to demand strict and complete adherence.

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[123] The great strength of marxism is precisely its promise of a new human nature. On this account, it continues to be severely criticized as utopian and unreal. And yet on this same account it gathers new converts, anxious for some explanation, and aware of the giant strides in overcoming physical evil made by those countries committed to a marxist politic.

There remains but a single question which all philosophies of history have posed. Although it comes last in our study, it is by far the most important for perhaps it is the most profound reason for having a world-view at all. What should/can I do?[124]

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[124] An idea-system from this point of view is then the groundwork for an ethics. It is, unlike a metaphysical system (although asking many of the same questions and often taking its answers from ontological systems), directed primarily toward living, toward action. This is why its answers are never as crystal-clear as we would want them to be, and indeed as is possible in a solely rational system. This is why there are always two levels to a world-view: the level of the intellectual and that of the ordinary man. The former lies closer to the rational, metaphysical aspects of a Weltanschauung; the latter to the active, living aspects. This is why, too, that idea-systems coincide, overlap and even contradict. For in the end they are all concerned with the very same actions. Finally, the action-orientation of world-views is the reason why they are primarily historical realities, why they must change and develop in time. Far from lying somewhere beyond the static-dissolving touch to time, a living philosophy of history is both the constructor and the construction of the time in which it discovers itself. Thus it is always difficult to grasp the complete reality of a philosophy of history in a single stroke. It is a durational reality; much like the beach of a Pacific atoll, it remains and yet changes with the light and with the eddying tides.

The action-directedness of philosophies of history is what principally distinguishes them from philosophies in general and from those moral philosophies which depend on a nonhistorical metaphysic. The philosopher will have difficulty in understanding the dilemma of contemporary man as presented in the preceding pages, if he can think of solutions only as intellectual problems to be solved. The questions asked by

No one has better delineated the action-producing results of the various world-views than Oswald Spengler. Archaic and classical man (the Apollinian culture) was characterized by the sense of wholeness, of rest, of tranquility. Nothing could typify this better than the Doric temple, or better yet, perhaps the enclosed tranquil space of a later Roman basilica, constructed under the Magian influence. Here everything was harmony, perfection, calm. The goal of the individual life: harmony, well-living, the adaptation of the here and now of time to the real reality of the timeless. The conformity of the human world with the world of the gods. What can I do? I can build my life as harmoniously as possible. I can strive for a wholeness, and inner and outer health. I can strive not to strive. What ought I do? I ought

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historical man, however, are not merely intellectual problems. Man's life in time could hardly be characterized as rational problem-solving. Or at least only if we leave out a large portion of man's reality baggage: intuition, emotion, sentiment, tradition, societal pressure, economics, the unconscious and other factors. For the rationalist as well as for the materialist (and perhaps the two are more closely connected than we often realize) man's contemporary dilemma seems artificial, his life absurdly anguished because of trifles, or ridiculously tortured by a pride which modern man refuses to recognize in himself. Now all this may, in fact, be true, but it in no way lessens the anguish or eliminates the pride. Whatever the reasons for the dilemma (and it is sufficiently clear that they seem to be valid), the dilemma actually exists, and ought to be resolved--unless man is to opt for a cynicism toward his own reality. Which final solution, however much a choice it may be, would be fatal to productivity.

to see to it that nature and world conform to the reality on high. I ought to propitiate the gods, offset their anger which might upset the equilibrium. I ought to make my life as much a part of their reality by mythic rites and observances as I can. I ought to be just, prudent towards others because this makes for balanced living. Nowhere was this morality developed more highly than in China with the teachings of Confucius and his followers. Nowhere was it presented more perfectly than in the statues of a tranquil Buddha or the sculpture of Praxiteles. Nowhere more obstinately practiced than by the Indian guru lost in contemplation in the concourse of a Calcutta rail station. Nowhere more pithily summarized than in the Golden Rule of Confucius and of Jesus: Do unto others as you would have them do for you.

The second great idea-system, the progressive Western school, is quite different. Here is striving, climbing, thrust, movement, energy. Not the quiet enclosed space of a Greek temple, nor the floating dome of a mosque, but the spires, ogives, and buttresses of a Chartres, a Reims, a Notre Dame. Not the natural beauty of Praxiteles and Myron, but gargoyles, the tympan of Vézelay, cubism and abstract expressionism. The goal of the individual life: progress, improvement, seeking, searching, open-endedness. No longer conformity to the world of nature and the world of the gods, but control of nature and the reduction of gods and other powers which seem to dominate. What can I do? I can expand myself and my domain. I can strive to dominate my own inner self as well as my land, my neighborhood and my neighbors. I can seek to go beyond myself, indeed beyond good and evil.[125] Only by going beyond myself, out of myself, will I truly begin to exist.[126] I ought to be infinite, but I cannot. Thus I am in an ever-present tension, desiring always what is impossible. I ought to give myself to others in justice, fairness, prudence, and charity because this will improve me, open me, give me myself. This view was nowhere more highly developed than in modern United States and Western Europe with the teachings of Benjamin Franklin, the Encyclopedists, and the German philosophers. Nowhere more perfectly represented than in a gothic cathedral, a Jackson Pollock, and the Empire State Building in New York City. Nowhere more obstinately adhered to than by a member of the Rotary International. No better expressed than Marx's

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[125] The theme of much late nineteenth-century literature; Raskolnikov in Dostoyevsky's _Crime and Punishment_; Nietzsche's _Beyond Good and Evil_.

[126] A favorite theme of the existentialist school.

"man is the measure of man."

One can see without too much straining and difficulty that these two world-views, while appearing historically, exist contemporaneously at the present moment. In some areas of his life, man wishes to adopt the Magian-Apollinian-christian view, that of wholeness and balance; while in other domains he is convinced that only the Faustian image is worth his efforts. He sees that his Faustian character has brought him a wealth and a material achievement undreamed of by any of his ancestors, even the most optimistic and utopian. He is aware that he alone of all humans is able to know more about himself, his past, and the past of all those gone before him. He is aware that because of his striving and spirit of conquest not only has he extended the frontiers of earth to the most hitherto secret terrestrial regions, but that now he gropes into a space which his forefathers believed to be the home of the gods. And he hopes to plan human colonies on the stars which until not so long ago were the gods themselves.

But at the same time he is also sadly aware that these same achievements have meant a diminishment of himself, were bought at a high price, a loss of that Apollinian harmony, a lessening of the desire for wholeness, a lack of mystery, devotion, respect. This makes the Faustian man feel strangely ill at ease, not quite comfortable in his striving world. But he is held back from opting for that view which could recompense the loss, fill the lack, and increase the desire. For as he looks upon the Apollinian-christian view he sees something unworthy of his own powers: what appears to be undue submission to mystery, complaisance in the face of suffering and evil, fear in the place of rational surety or scientific probability, and a god who constantly retreats as the piercing lights of modern science illumine his last somber hiding places in ignorance and self-defense.

One thing is obvious from this short study of the basic patterns in the history of the philosophy of history. It is that, as the evolutionary humanists affirm, no single existing world-view is able to satisfy contemporary man's needs. The questions remain the same and there is even some agreement among the idea-systems on the answers. But no single one can provide the basis for the kind of answers which man actually needs. This does not necessarily mean that there are no answers, that the questions are absurd in the first place. An attitude such as this may be taken; it is a real choice. But such is not generally the mood of contemporary man. Yet I venture to suggest that if his dilemma continues unresolved for very long, absurdity and cynicism will become his only choice, for other world-views will have shown themselves sterile and incapable of effective productivity and fruitful development.

Much of what we have studied here buttresses the arguments of the evolutionary humanists set forth at the very beginning of this work. Like them, we have concluded that the new knowledge and especially the contemporary understanding of time as duration (together with all the consequences this has in the sciences and the humanities) has forced man to requestion all of his accepted values, to reappraise all of his traditional idea-systems.

Contemporary man knows what he wants, he understands the questions, and he has inklings into the answers. He can only conclude then that it is a new integrating vision of the universe which is his ultimate need now--in order to channel all his energy without an excess of waste toward the construction of this universe to which he is so passionately devoted. He wants to be Apollinian and Faustian at one and the same time. He wants wholeness and effort, tranquility and struggle. His search is for the coincidentia oppositorum. It is in answer to this quest that we may turn now to a study of the philosophy of history of Teilhard de Chardin and inspect his claim at providing the guideline for such a world-view.

CHAPTER III

SEEING

Born on 1 May 1881 at Sarcenat, France, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin was the fourth of eleven children born into the Teilhard de Chardin family of provincial aristocrats. He observed of his childhood, spent in isolated comfort in the mountains of Auvergne,

> As far as I can go back in my childhood, nothing seems to me more characteristic or familiar in my inner disposition than the taste or irresistible need for some "one and only sufficing and necessary" thing: in order to be fully at ease, to be completely happy, the knowledge that "some essential thing" does really exist, to which everything else is no more than an accessory or, maybe, an embellishment. . . .[1]

Both the family chateau and the town house of his cousins provided the backdrop for the two great drives which molded the intellectual life of Pierre Teilhard: matter and spirit:

> I was just like any other child. I was interested especially in mineralogy and biological observation. I used to love to follow the course of the clouds, and I knew the stars by their names. . . . A memory? My very first! I was five or six. My mother had snipped off a few of my curls. I picked one up and held it close to the fire. The hair was burnt up in a fraction of a second. A terrible grief

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[1] Teilhard de Chardin, "The Heart of the Matter," 1950.

assailed me; I had learnt that I was perishable.[2]

Pierre was educated in the provincial Jesuit secondary school of Mongré, near Villefranche-sur-Saone where he displayed an indifference toward intellectual subjects (particularly religion), but continued the interest in mineralogy acquired from his father. On 4 June 1897 he wrote his parents that he would enter the religious life with the Jesuits and two years later he entered their novitiate at Aix-en-Provence. His training was to last thirteen years as novice, junior, scholastic, teacher, theology student, and tertian. Because of the Laic Laws passed in France during the early years of the twentieth century, Teilhard was transferred to the Channel Islands (Jersey) where he experienced a crisis which would determine much in his future life. At Jersey he was tempted to give up his study of geology and the natural sciences to devote himself exclusively to religion. It was his spiritual director who assured him that the two were not mutually exclusive, but were somehow intimately connected.

In September 1905, Teilhard was sent to teach physics and chemistry in the Jesuit college of the Holy Family at Cairo, Egypt, where he spent three years.

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[2] In Claude Cuenot, Teilhard de Chardin (Baltimore: Helicon, 1965), p. 3.

Here he spent all his holidays and free time in research, walking through the fossil beds and sending back findings to the Geological Society of France. But most important was the sense of awe experienced in this first contact with the East:

> The East flowed over me in a first wave of exoticism. I gazed at it and drank it in eagerly--the country itself, not its peoples or its history (which as yet held no interest for me), but its light, its vegetation, its fauna, its deserts. . . .[3]

From 1908 to 1911, Teilhard studied theology in Hastings, England, at the same time continuing his studies in the natural sciences. It was during this period that the idea of evolution, especially through the reading of Henri Bergson's L'évolution créatrice, began to take hold of him. On 24 August 1911, he was ordained a priest and then spent the two following years in the laboratory of Marcellin Boule, professor of paleontology at the Natural History Museum, Paris.

Teilhard was called up as a stretcher-bearer in December 1914: the first World War was to be the crucible from which sprang the first sparks of genius. For the war gave him time to think and to synthesize:

> And so I started to think again, and to jot down in an exercise-book some notes about a subject that has always been for me the real problem of my interior life . . . it is how to reconcile progress and

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[3] "The Heart of the Matter."

> detachment. . . . How can one be as much a Christian as no other man, and yet more a man than anyone?[4]

Thus, he began to create the world-view which would be a synthesis of evolutionary scientific theories and christian belief.

While still in the army, Teilhard made his solemn vows (26 May 1918), on the occasion of which he developed his essay on "The Priest," one of a series of essays written during the war years which contained most of his ideas in germ.

By 1919, Teilhard's thoughts had so matured that he was able fearlessly to invoke matter as "blessed," "mighty," the "irresistible march of evolution," revealing to us "the dimensions of God."[5]

From 1919 to 1922, Teilhard was in Paris studying for and then receiving his licentiate and doctorate in geology. Here he fostered friendships with Boule, Abbé Breuil, Edouard Le Roy, and Maurice Blondel. In 1923-24, he made his first expedition to China, returning in 1925 only to become embroiled with his superiors both in France and in Rome over his views on the christian doctrine of original sin. A working paper, drawn up by Teilhard to be used for discussion with friends, was placed in unfriendly hands and sent to Rome for inspection. The result of the controversy was a benevolent--but nonetheless exacting--exile away from Paris, or, more precisely, the deprivation of a public teaching platform in Paris. This privation Teilhard felt deeply.[6]

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[4] Letter to Pere Fontoymont, 15 March 1916.

[5] "The Spiritual Power of Matter," in Ecrits du temps de la guerre, 1914-1918 (Paris: Grasset, 1965). (Hereafter referred to as ETG.)

The next twenty years Teilhard spent, for the most part, in China, with occasional trips back to Paris where he spent long hours in discussion with friends and associates--many of them made through overseas correspondence to discuss one or another of his writings distributed privately and discretely. From 1929 to 1931, Teilhard worked at the famous Chou-kou-tien diggings where the Peking man had been recently discovered. He then joined the Yellow Expedition sponsored by Citröen which took him across much of western China. Intellectually, Teilhard began to see that one of the keys to a renewing vision of the universe was man himself: ". . . with all this work going on, hardly anyone has yet thought of asking the question that really matters: What precisely is the phenomenon of man?"[7]

By the mid-thirties, Teilhard had travelled to the United States, Ethiopia, Burma, and India; and he had made several journeys back to France. In 1937, his intellectual and spiritual development was analogized:

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[6] Cf. Cuenot, Teilhard, pp. 115 ff.

[7] Oeuvres, III, 228. (Oeuvres hereafter referred to as OE.)

> Never before, perhaps, did I perceive so clearly the possible meaning of the deep evolution of my internal life: the dark purple of the universal matter, first passing for me into the Gold of Spirit, then into the white incandescence of Personality, then finally (and this is the present stage) into the immaterial (or rather supermaterial) ardour of love.[8]

The years 1939-1946 embrace a life passed exclusively in China because of the second World War. Forced into scientific inaction, Teilhard spent much of his time in reading: Malinowski, Spengler, Toynbee, Malraux, Camus, Sartre, Barth, Sinclair Lewis, Gide, Santayana, Koestler, Dostoievsky, Tolstoi, Graham Green, Huxley, Maréchal, and others. But he was too much a genius to borrow from any of these. Rather he used them to prove or disprove the hypotheses which he himself developed from experience in both the scientific and religious worlds.

Yet it was this genius which was suspect for many of his colleagues, whose attitude may best be guessed by this anecdote: Arriving at a Jesuit house in Peking, Teilhard was greeted by the superior: "Father, as an evolutionist and a communist, you are undesirable here, and will have to return to France as soon as possible." "A Communist?" replied Teilhard. "I'm not a Communist." "You are an evolutionist," was the retort, "and that is sufficient to show that you are a Communist."[9]

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[8] Cuenot, Teilhard, p. 211.

The immediate postwar years were spent in Paris where Teilhard mingled with the intellectuals: Mounier, Marcel, Berdiaeff, Vinogradoff, Lavalle, Hyppolite, Huxley, and Torres-Bodet. His vision moved toward man's future, a subject upon which he dwelt more and more frequently, developing his theories of socialization and totalization. Meanwhile his relations with Rome had deteriorated as one after another of his major works, including the now famous The Phenomenon of Man, were refused the church's *imprimatur*. His attitude:

> A week ago I had a letter from my General (Rome) forbidding me (in a perfectly courteous way) from publishing anything that involved philosophy or theology. And that neatly cuts out a large part of the activity still left open to me. . . . All this isn't making life any brighter. Still, it is forcing me back upon "the one thing that is necessary." "Everything that happens is worthy of worship," Termier used to say.[10]

In 1948, he left for Rome to make a final attempt to obtain permission to publish, but this too failed.

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[9] *Ibid.*, p. 239.

[10] Letter to the Abbé Breuil, 23 September 1947.

After a trip to South Africa, Teilhard accepted the invitation of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research in New York as an associate. New York would be his last permanent residence. He made another visit to South Africa via South America stopping at Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, and Trinidad. He participated in numerous symposia, among them the 1954 centennial Columbia University Symposium with Niels Bohr, Archibald Macliesh, Julian Huxley and Van Dusen. In 1954 he made his last visit to France. On 10 April 1955, Easter Sunday, Teilhard died in New York City.

The testimonials of his life tempt one to eulogize: all are unanimous on his intelligence, gentility, perceptiveness. Intellectually, Teilhard was an original thinker: he read others in search of proofs for what he believed was true, criticizing them when he believed they were too narrow or anti-evolutionary. Yet his attractive force must be attributed not merely to his genius, but rather to his synthesizing ability, his ability to make connections where others found only disarray or contradiction.

The task of introducing Teilhard de Chardin and of presenting a summary and critique of his thought to a public already so much aware of him poses several thorny problems. The level of attention given to his works differs from country to country, ranging from "extremely well known" in France, Belgium, southern Germany, and many countries of Latin America, to "general interest" in the Anglo-Saxon, Canadian and Asiatic countries. At the same time, the term "public" is highly inadequate, for outside of France and Belgium, it is only the highly-educated (and, for the most part, Catholic and Marxist) elite who have shown concern and enthusiasm. Almost everywhere there have been popularized journal summaries and magazine presentations on Teilhard and on his thought, so that the name is not unrecognized; there are vague notions, many erroneous, shared by the vast numbers who are nourished only by the mass media.

Second, the amount of material available--and a glance at the bibliography is enough to testify to this --is staggering. There is no sign that this output will be decreasing within the next several years. Add to this the fact that much of the primary sources are not yet published, and some material completely unavailable, and the reader will see the complications involved in such an undertaking as this.

Third, the poetic and lyric qualities of Teilhard's own prose, the clarity of his thought patterns, and the surety and reasoned argumentation of almost all of his works: all this is enough to put off even the most ambitious writer. As Piet Smulders remarked, "Any summary is betrayal."[11] Yet summarize we must, hoping that the betrayal be not willful and the diminution (inevitable, I am convinced, in any translation of the thought of one through the pen of another) not such that will falsify or divert the original stream of intellectual energy.

It is my conviction that Teilhard de Chardin can supply the need for a contemporary world-view, can give adequate answers to the most urgent questions posed by contemporary man. I do not contend that every question will be answered satisfactorily (indeed, I am not at all sure that the basic questions of man can ever be answered to complete satisfaction by anyone). Nor do I assert that Teilhard de Chardin is the only solution. Nor, further, that there are not questions which he never bothered nor thought to answer. The final contention is simple and personal: I believe Teilhard de Chardin answers the basic questions better than anyone to this point. And it is my hope that advances will be made upon these solutions in the future.

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[11] Piet Smulders, La vision de Teilhard de Chardin (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1965), p. 214; also The Design of Teilhard de Chardin, p. 200.

Point of Departure

To understand Teilhard de Chardin as a person and as a thinker, to understand his writings and his teaching,[12] one must try to understand what Teilhard was attempting to achieve. On this score he is much criticized for overstepping either the limits of science or of theology, for not being sufficiently humanistic or not sufficiently scientific.[13] All these criticisms stem from a profound and serious misapprehension of Teilhard's starting point and the major thrust of his work.

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[12] Although he himself denied any desire to be a teacher, "Of course, in all this I am conscious (and it is important that I should continue to be so) of being, for what you have to say, an example, rather than a model or an explorer. I can see quite clearly that my strength (or, if you prefer, the source of such inferences as I may have) derive in no way from my having 'invented' anything--but simply from the fact that I have found myself 'resounding' in tune with a certain vibration, a certain human and religious note which at the moment is all around us and in which people have recognized and rediscovered one another" ("La fin de l'éspèce," 10 December 1952). "In all my work I am conscious of being no more than a sort of sound-box, amplifying what people around me are thinking. [I neither am, nor can, nor do I wish to be 'a master.'] Take from me what suits you and build your own structures" ("Barrière de la mort et co-réflexion," 1 January 1955, cited by Claude Cuenot, *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin* [London: Burns and Oates, 1958], p. 482). Sentence in brackets not translated in English edition.

[13] Cf. Emil Rideau, *La pensée de Pierre Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: Seuil, 1965); Paul Grenet, *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin ou le philosophe malgré lui* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1960); Raymond Nogar, *Lord of the Absurd* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966); Oliver Rabut, *A Dialogue with Teilhard de Chardin* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1961); Philippe de la Trinité, *Rome et Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: Fayard, le Signe, 1966); Maurice Vernet, *La grande illusion de Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: Gedaye, 1966).

Simply said, this point of departure is the contemporary world, the world as present to a mind sensitive and probing, a mind whose greatest effort is directed toward the discovery of a unity in the currents of reality flowing about it. The contemporary world is the ever-present referent to which intellectual decisions and discoveries are always relayed in a constant effort to check their rapport with reality. Whether it is the trenches of the first World War which sparked the first series of brilliant essays,[14] the hyper-intellectual atmosphere of Paris, the dust and delicacy of Peking, or the plains of China, the long quiet hours of a transoceanic voyage, the concrete and glass of technological New York--all these are the scenes out of which the thought of Teilhard grows and develops. In answer to the questions which this reality, in this world, in this time, poses, Teilhard develops his major theses.

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[14] "La vie cosmique," 1916; "La maitrise du monde et le regne de Dieu," 1916; "Le Christ dans la matière," 1916; "La lutte contre la multitude," 1917; "Le milieu mystique," 1917; "L'union créatrice," 1917; "La nostalgie du front," 1917; "Mon univers," 1918; "Le prêtre," 1918; "La foi qui opère," 1918; "Forma Christi," 1918; "Note sur l'élément universel du monde," 1918; "Terre promise," 1919; "L'élément universel," 1919; "Les noms de la matière," 1919; "La puissance spirituelle de la matière," 1919 (Published as Ecrits du temps de la guerre, 1916-1918).

This starting point makes his vision personal, yet reflecting truths available to all. In the first overall explanation of his system (1918), Teilhard's departure is the personal desire which he experienced in his own childhood to possess an Absolute.[15] In 1924 it is the awareness that the average man of the twentieth century looks for an equilibrium in his interior life.[16] Ten years later, Teilhard sees value in his work because he has personally been able to resolve a contemporary problem: the opposition between being a "child of Heaven" and a "child of the earth."[17] In 1948, he entitles one of the major summaries of his thought "Comment je vois," how things seem to me.[18] But he is convinced that his vision was correct and that, in fact, his own experience merely repeated that of many others:

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[15] "As far back as I can remember (from before the age of ten) I noticed in myself the existence of a clearly dominant passion: the passion for the Absolute. . . . The need to possess, in all, 'something Absolute' was, from my childhood, the axis of my interior life" (ETG, p. 269). All translations mine unless otherwise noted.

[16] "I propose here simply to explore the personal way of understanding the world to which I found myself progressively led by the inevitable development of my human and christian consciousness. . . . It would be easy, evidently, from an intellectual point of view, to criticize the system I propose. These criticisms could in no way take away the special value of bearing an irrefutable psychological witness. Whether my philosophy be more or less adroit it will always remain certain, as a fact, that the ordinary man of the twentieth century, because he participated normally in the ideas and preoccupations of his time, could only find the equilibrium for his spiritual life in a physical and unitary conception of the World and of Christ--and that there he found a peace and a limitless blossoming" (OE, IX, 65-66).

> In all my works, I am conscious of being no more than a sort of sound-box, amplifying what people around me are thinking. I neither am, nor can I, nor do I wish to be a master [maître]. Take from me what suits you, and build your own structure.[19]

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[17] "The originality of my belief is that it has its roots in two areas of life usually considered antagonistic. By education and intellectual formation I belong to the 'children of Heaven.' But by temperament and by professional studies I am 'a child of the Earth.' Thus placed by life at the heart of two worlds of which I know through everyday experience the theory, the language and the sentiment, I erected no interior partitions. Rather I let the apparent contrary experiences react with full liberty one upon the other deep within me. Now at the end of this operation, after thirty years consecrated to this pursuit of interior unity, I have the impression that a synthesis has naturally worked itself out between the two currents which so attract me" ("Comment je crois").

[18] "One will find in these pages--to approve or to criticize--the authentic and complete resume of my present intellectual position in regard to the world and to God--the essence of my faith" ("Comment je vois").

[19] Cf. above, p. 177, n. 12: ". . . I think that the circumstances (internal or external) of my life have left me to strangely amplify certain intellectual or even mystic tendencies which are everywhere 'in the air' at this moment" (Letter to M. Ferrard Lafargue, 28 July 1952). ". . . I see very clearly that my force (or, if you prefer, the cause of any influence I may have) is not because of what I have 'invented' whatever it may be--but simply because of the fact that I find myself

Because the nature of Teilhard's work is thus less a deductive system than a mirroring of reality, we prefer to use the term "vision" to describe the result of the Teilhardian effort. And this is in perfect accord with the manner in which Teilhard himself evaluated his attempt. It is an effort to see:

> Not at all a thesis, but a presentation, or even, if you wish, an appeal. The appeal of a voyager, who, having left the route, finds that he has fallen upon by chance a point of view which makes every thing clear, and who cries out to his companions: Come and see!"[20]

Again, he insists that what we need is, indeed, "less new facts . . . than a new way of looking at and accepting the facts."[21] Before our times, scholars seemed to be indifferent to the study of the past. They made no effort to try to understand it or to see it.[22] Now, however, we cannot be satisfied with this type of action; we must learn how to see. The "prologue" to the *Phenomenon of Man* is entitled "To See" and Teilhard goes

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conveniently resounding to a certain vibration, to a certain human and religious note which is now everywhere in the air and where people are finding and recognizing themselves" (Letter to Wildiers, 10 December 1952).

[20] *OE*, VII, 358. [21] *Ibid.*, p. 309.

[22] "The Middle Ages were marked by a curious indifference to the investigation and the reconstruction of the past. This was well preserved, naturally, in the confusion of the chronicles. But no effort was made to reconstruct it and to see it" (*OE*, VI, 210).

so far as to assert: "Seeing. We might say that the whole of life lies in that verb--if not in end, at least in essence."[23] In order to grow, to increase, to become more and more unified, it is necessary to be able to see more and more clearly, to synthesize what surrounds us, to reduce to harmony and order. This is the very meaning of consciousness; and the different levels of consciousness are distinguished by the way we are able to see. Seeing is not a fantasy, a curiosity, a luxury.

> To try to see more and better is not a matter of whim or curiosity or self-indulgence. To see or to perish is the very condition laid upon everything that makes up the universe, by reason of the mysterious gift of existence.[24]

That is the final choice. Either one learns how to look at the world in order to discover it or he remains blindly controlled by forces which he cannot understand because he does not see their sense. He has no controlling vision by which he perceives what actually is the reality behind appearances.

This controlling vision is what we have in the first chapters referred to as a Weltanschauung, an idea-system, or a world-view. It is the same for Teilhard. He defines a Weltanschauung as "a vision of the world at once intellectual and emotional, aureoled by all the magic gradually accumulated by Art and Poetry."[25] It is a point of view, a way of seeing things, which tries to take into account the whole of the human person. It is not meant to be satisfying to the intellect alone, but also to the emotions; it is meant to appeal to the whole man. A Weltanschauung is that frame of reference out of which the person acts; neither purely intellectual nor solely emotional, a world-view is simply that: how a man views the world.

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[23] The Phenomenon of Man (New York: Harper, 1959), p. 31. Hereafter cited as PH. OE, I, 25.

[24] Ibid.

Because the idea-system is a universal outlook, that is, because it touches all aspects of reality in unifying them in a kind of harmony, it cannot accept partial views or answers to specific problems which are in contradiction to its primary thesis. Thus the major quality of a world-view is its synthetic character. It attempts to unite all opposites and to respond to all challenges with a single viewpoint, a single outlook. Nothing is more obvious in Teilhard's world-view than this synthetic quality. Looking at the contemporary world which is always Teilhard's point of departure, he shares the sentiment common with twentieth-century man:

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[25] "Comment je vois," p. 13, n. 17. "A Weltanschauung, more essentially than a constructed system, is the angle of enthusiasm with which each spirit grasps the world" (Notes de lectures, 21 April 1917).

> It is a terrifying thing to have been born; I mean, to find oneself without having willed it, swept irrevocably along on a torrent of fearful energy which seems as though it wished to destroy everything it carries with it. . . . I am afraid, too, like all my fellow-men, of the future too heavy with mystery and too wholly new toward which time is driving me. Then like these men I wonder anxiously where life is leading me.[26]

The fear of being lost because the universe is so great, life so fragile, that man seems insignificant. The fear of being reduced to immobility, because man seems to be a finished biological being and there is no further he can go. And finally, but most serious, the fear of being closed up and imprisoned in a world hermetically sealed, without end, without meaning. "Fear of not being able to make others hear. Fear of not being able to move further. Fear of not being able to get out."[27] The anguish of contemporary man could scarcely be better captured by a Sartre or a Camus.

Looking out at the world, Teilhard, as we, could see much confusion, disgust, anxiety, fear, pessimism.[28]

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[26] Hymne de l'univers (Paris: Seuil, 1958), pp. 29-30. Hymn of the Universe (New York: Harper, 1966), pp. 29-30. Hereafter cited as HU.

[27] OE, II, 295. Cf. also ETG, pp. 310 ff: "I tremble before the infinity of possible shocks which can be produced between myself and the infinitely numerous and straining beings who inhabit the space where I am going to enlist myself. . . . How to dare risk a single step or especially to launch out courageously: and how not to fail, if I stop?"

[28] "Anxiety too natural for some in the face of

Confusion reigns in every domain. In fact, "apart from a few elementary laws of individual justice, empirically established and blindly followed, who can say what is good and what is evil? Can we even maintain that Good and Evil exist while the evolutionary course on which we are embarked has no clear direction?"[29] Such is the hazy view we have of reality. "Lacking a look-out point in the Universe, the most sharply opposed doctrines on these vital matters can be plausibly defended."[30] Meanwhile, without this direction, this controlling vision, vast sources of energy lie dormant or are used up in wasteful effort. The reddish glow of our great cities signifies a waste of energy.[31] The boundless powers of

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disorders which disconcert their notion of a nicely ordered bourgeois society. Secret revenge for others against the progress which threatens to prove that the future could be greater than the past. Strange ideal of virtue for still another group for whom the 'strong' man is he who knows how to destroy best the illusion, or rather the hopes of those around him. Need perhaps, as well, with certain minds, to fashion for themselves a facile originality by denying what others have laboriously constructed. What do we not have or read now about the decadence of civilization, or even the near end of the world" (OE, IX, 171).

[29] OE, V, pp. 119-20. The Future of Man (New York: Harper, 1964), pp. 90-91. Hereafter cited as FM.

[30] Ibid.

[31] "Let us look very coldly, as biologists and engineers, at the reddening atmosphere of our big cities. There--and everywhere for that matter--the earth continually dissipates, in pure loss, its most marvelous

human energetics was always a source of admiration for Teilhard. And he saw his attempt as a means of harnessing this energy. "You see," he wrote to his cousin Margeurite Teillard-Chambon,

> the more I think of it . . . the more I feel the necessity of defining and organizing the total human effort. Individual lives carry on from day to day; political foresight never goes beyond short-term economic or territorial ambitions. . . . Everyone, every life, proceeds at random.[32]

Human energy is in a precarious floating state; not having a direction, no clearly outlined goal, it is dissipated, poured out in search of nothing in particular and everything in general.

But this is not all. Aside from the pessimism, cynicism, and waste which characterize contemporary society, there still exist the age-old problems: the One and the Many, the separation between God and the World, and, perhaps most important of all, the problem of building a future. In some ways, the most obvious problem, or rather, that problem which underlies all the

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power. The Earth burns freely. How much energy do you think is lost in a single night, for the Spirit of the Earth?" (OE, VI, 42.) "For the man who sees nothing at the end of the world, nothing higher than himself, daily life can only be filled with pettiness and boredom. So much fruitless effort, so many wasted moments" (OE, V, 120 [FM, p. 91]).

[32] Génèse d'une pensée (Paris: Grasset, 1961), pp. 234-35. The Making of a Mind (New York: Harper, 1965), p. 181. Hereafter cited as MM.

rest, is the problem of the One and the Many. How to return to a unified vision of the world? If the world today is sceptical, if it thinks the problem can never be solved, we remain in darkness. There are those, however, who answer in terms of pluralism. They are the positivists and the aesthetes. For them, there are many possible answers, all equally true, all equally tenable. To them all, Teilhard answers: You have forgotten Buddha, Plato, and Paul. Behind the scepticism, the world searches for unification, for an answer, for a future.[33]

To those who still hold for a god, the unity problem takes on other dimensions. How can I remain faithful to my calling as a son of God and yet plunge wholeheartedly into the world? Never really plagued by the questions of scepticism and cynicism, Teilhard personally suffered from the second problem. In the "Comment je crois" (1934), for example, he explains how his faith in the world seems to be stronger even than his faith in God.[34] As early as 1918, in "My Universe," he remarks: "If I judge it by myself, the great temptation of the century (and the present hour) is (and will be even more) to see the World of nature, of life, and of humanity as greater, closer, more mysterious, more alive than God and Scripture."[35] In his second intellectual testament, "My Universe" of 1924, he said, "It will always remain certain, as fact, that the ordinary man of the twentieth century, because he participated normally in the ideas and preoccupations of his times, could only find the equilibrium for his spiritual life in a physical and unitary conception of the World and of Christ."[36] And he concludes that "to show this solid coherence among the innumerable elements of the physical, moral, social, religious, natural, total World will be my whole 'apologetic.'"[37] There is no need to continue examples.

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[33] Cf. "La route de l'ouest," 8 September 1932, pp. 1-2: "Dominated by an agnosticism, falsely regarded as scientific, which defends itself by proving nothing beyond the identity with the Past, the modern world could imagine that the question of the Unity of being was insoluble and vain. . . . Even more dangerous because they furnish a substitute for the ideal, the positivist or esthetic pluralism, again in fashion have believed in suppressing or supplanting the mystical in teaching that the universe, essentially divided into individual units, incessantly culminates in the individual and in the present moment."

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[34] "If after some interior reversal, I should come to lose successively my faith in Christ, my faith in a personal God, my faith in Spirit, it seems to me that I should, invariably, continue to believe in the world" ("Comment je vois," p. 3).

[35] ETG, p. 278.

[36] OE, IX, 65-66.

[37] Ibid., p. 67. "This is the problem of life, where inevitably in a christian heart, the divine faith which sustains his individual hopes collides with the earthly passion which is the sap of all human effort . . . and this is the word which I wish to be heard: that of the reconciliation of God and of the world (ETG, p. 8). "So I started again to move and to plunge into

The journals are filled with summaries entitled "my message," "what I see," "my gospel," and the like, all of which begin with a dissatisfaction with the contemporary world.

But the problem of uniting in the human spirit both God and the World would have little importance in face of what seems the most insoluble of difficulties: building the future. For even if we make an act of faith and begin to move forward, what is to keep us from falling back down? Nothing seems certain; even scientific laws are simply laws of probability. When confronted by the forces of determinism and inevitabilities of which I am completely unaware, and especially with that great uncontrollable event, Death, the future reveals itself to me with only two faces: "Capricious Fortune and Implacable Destiny."[38] "Fragility," "contingence," the "vertigo of fragility and instability,"[39]

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the notes of a school notebook on a subject which for me has always been the problem of my interior life--a little bit like the Roman question for Newman or the source of the appeal of the soul for Psicharri--I mean the conciliation of progress and detachment, of the passionate and legitimate love of the greater Earth and the unique search for the Kingdom of heaven. How to be as christian as anyone, yet being more human than anyone?" (Letter to Père Victor Fontoynont cited in de Lubac, La pensée réligieuse de Teilhard de Chardin, p. 345).

[38] ETG, pp. 310-13.

[39] Retreat Notes, 1948, cited in ETG, p. 310.

so that life seems to be lived simply by chance. Thus the greatest and most crying need of all: "We must, under the pain of falling again into discouragement, and then inertia, achieve the ordering of the Future and make it supple."[40] The entire problem can thus be summarized: "To find the secret of walking surely and freely toward the Future."[41]

The Discovery of Evolution

To build this future one must see synthetically, and to see synthetically one must move out of the forest, higher up the mountain to take a good long look at the world, somewhat removed from its fears, anxieties and complexities.[42] One must move higher to be able to see the whole; to get beyond the pettiness so as to be able to see the greatness. "All the rest is too small for us."[43] What does this view from on high show? First of all, what is most obvious. I think it would be safe to say that part of the popularity of Teilhard is his ability to make meaningful that which is bypassed by most others. For example, to arrive at a solution to the problem of matter and spirit, Teilhard remarks:

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[40] ETG, p. 314. [41] Ibid., p. 315.

[42] "I can see only one way of escape from this state of uncertainty which threatens to paralyse all positive action: we must rise above the storm, the chaos of surface detail, and from a higher vantage point look for the outline of some great and significant phenomenon. This is what I have tried to do . . ." (OE, V, 160 [FM, p. 125]).

[43] Letter to L. Zanta, 10 January 1927 in Lettres à Leontine Zanta (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1965), p. 84.

> As point of departure for this ascent, I will take, very simply, the fact, ridiculously evident, of human plurality. There is not only one man in the world, but there are quantities, and even myriads.[44]

In any case, the view "from above" provides the key, the master plan, the system of walks and alleys, which makes the Universe intelligible and a future possible. This key is the simple fact that the Universe has a history.

The discovery of evolution of duration was the first and perhaps the most decisive of the discoveries which Teilhard made in his intellectual life. In 1912, in one of his earliest essays, he had adopted what was then (and unfortunately remains so now quite often) the common teaching of the churches concerning evolution: there is no proof that the energy behind evolution does not come from an outside agent (obviously God) and that man's devotion to creating a terrestrial work shows man's rebellion against the divine will.[45] Nevertheless, as a scientist, Teilhard had already accepted evolution which he first discovered while studying theology, especially through reading Bergson's L'evolution créatrice. The transformation which the discovery of evolution made upon his intellect, upon his life, would take a whole lifetime to measure and colored every aspect of his interior vision of the universe.[46]

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[44] OE, VII, 30.

[45] "L'homme devant les enseignements de l'Eglise et devant la philosophie spiritualiste," 1912.

Already in 1923, Teilhard was writing: "Personally, I know no scientist who is not an evolutionist."[47] And from 1921 when Études published his "How the Transformist Question Is Posed Today" until "The Energy of Evolution" in 1953, he never ceased to write specific articles and essays on the problem and evidences of evolution. The evolutionary view changed everything, a fact which had to be repeated over and over again: "Let us understand it well once and for all: from now on, for us and for our descendants, the times and the psychological dimensions have definitely changed."[48] In the orderly world of Newton, the universe was a kind of great clock; now we see its operation in the dynamic process which we understand as evolution. Thus the Teilhardian Weltanschauung is an outlook in movement, an evolutionary viewpoint.[49]

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[46] Cf. "Coeur de la matiere," 15 August 1950.

[47] Letter to A. Valensin, 1923, cited by Bruno de Solages, Teilhard de Chardin (Toulouse: privately published, 1967), p. 80. ". . . transformism is no longer a simple hypothesis, it is a general method of research, accepted in practice by all scholars. More broadly still, it is merely the extension to zoology and botany of a form of science (historical science) which is continually extending its rule over all human sciences (physics and chemistry, the study of religion, institutions, etc.)" (OE, III, 215. The Vision of the Past [New York: Harper, 1967], p. 152. Hereafter cited as VP). "Behind and before us, each reality is propagated indefinitely; no one whose thought counts any longer doubts that in this ceaseless becoming is manifest one of the most general and objective conditions of experience" (OE, VI, 65).

What did Teilhard understand by evolution? The question is basic, for the idea of evolution, or rather, the reality of evolution, is the filter through which is passed every bit of data which comes from the outside world. Once investigated and analyzed, it takes its rightful place in the synthetic vision of movement. The critical point in the discovery of duration by man came in the sixteenth century. Then, as now, man found himself confronted with a barrier he could not surmount until he was able to take a certain position in regard to his interpretation of the phenomena around him.[50] Sixteenth-century man, through Copernicus and Galileo, chose the way of science.[51] The same kind of fork in the road occurred again in the nineteenth century, and, through Darwin and his predecessors, man chose again: this time for an evolutionary view of the world. The first theories were, of course, oversimplified and naive because of undue optimism and lack of evidence. But as the decades passed, more and more facts made it clear that evolution is a solid reality--apart from the differing theories on its mechanism, it must claim the allegiance of all those who are brave enough to keep their eyes (and minds) open to the concrete world.[52]

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[48] OE, VII, 264.

[49] "Any effort to understand what is now taking place in the human conscience must of necessity proceed from the fundamental change of view which since the sixteenth century has been steadily exploding and rendering fluid what had served to be the ultimate stability--our concept of the world itself. To our clearer vision the universe is no longer a state but a process. The cosmos has become a cosmogenesis. And it may be said without exaggeration that, directly or indirectly, all the intellectual crises through which civilization has passed in the last four centuries arose out of the successive stages whereby a static Weltanschauung has been and is being transformed, in our minds and hearts, into a Weltanschauung of movement" (OE, V, 341 [FM, pp. 261-62]).

Now the essence of evolution is a simple enough fact: "Every being in our universe is by its material organization part and parcel of a whole past. It is in essence a history."[53] The understanding of the meaning of this fact seems simple enough. If, for example, some terrible cataclysm were to occur to our earth and paleontologists were to come from another planet, we would not expect them to believe that our bicycles, automobiles and planes had not undergone a development and had been created just as they are now. Similarly, everyone accepts the fact of the growth of language. So science too adopts the same historical method, the method of becoming.

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[50] Cf. OE, V, 335 (FM, p. 258).

[51] OE, VII, 255 ff.

[52] "What makes a transformist is not, let it be clearly stated, that he is a Darwinist or Larmarckian, a mechanist or vitalist, a mono- or polyphyletist. . . . What modern natural scientists most fundamentally hold to--what they cling to as an unshakable conviction, a conviction that has continuously grown beneath their surface arguments--is that fact of a physical connection between living beings" (OE, III, 35-36 [VP, pp. 21-22]). Cf. also OE, III, 211 ff. (VP, pp. 151 ff.).

[53] OE, III, 38 (VP, p. 24).

> History is gradually invading all the disciplines, from metaphysics to physical chemistry, and we have reached the point where . . . a sort of single science of reality is beginning to take shape: something that we could call "The natural history of the world." In fact, "we are in process of discovering Time."[54]

Until the last century, time was considered a kind of receptacle in which unchanging and immobile essences floated. Movement and change only touched the surface of the waters; the depths were always untouched. But science has changed all that, and it is now clear that movement and duration extend even to the essences of things so that "partially, infinitesimally, without losing any of its individual value, each element is coextensive with history, the reality of the Whole."[55] Thus, after Pascal's double spatial abyss of the infinitely great and the infinitely small, there is the third abyss of Time, of the Past. To be an evolutionist is simply to say that we can have a history of nature, much as we have the history of civilizations.[56]

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[54] OE, III, 179-80 (VP, p. 128). "History is invading and tends to absorb all sciences" ("Pantheisme et Christianisme," p. 5). "The truth is that natural history is merely discovering, on its own territory, the same laws of development and the same language as any other study of the past. To shake transformism in its essence would be to attack the whole of any science of past reality, would be to upset the whole science of history" (OE, III, 178-79 [VP, p. 127]).

Of course, here it is not a question of bicycles and airplanes, but of the whole universe, and especially of living things. Evolution is an assertion of the essential unity of the universe, of its coherence because each element is linked with the other through duration. Thus, no longer can we speak of the cosmos, as if the universe were a once-for-all phenomenon. In the light of evolution, we must say cosmogenesis, and the envelope of this cosmogenesis is time.[57] Included in cosmogenesis is man himself, whose precise place in nature and the effects of the discovery of evolution upon him we will discuss in the following chapter. But even now we are forced to insist on this basic fact, which flows directly from a proper understanding of evolution: There are no exceptions to the common law of the universe. Once it is grasped that all of nature has a history, then man too has a history in line with the rest of the universe. We who are searching for a new historical outlook can easily see how pregnant is this assertion.

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[55] OE, III, 181-82 (VP, p. 125).

[56] OE, III, 214 (VP, p. 152).

[57] OE, IX, 135. "Since Darwin, the idea of evolution (of the organic history of beings) has invaded the whole domain of the Real (Physics, Chemistry, Astronomy, etc.). And, to this degree of generality and urgency, it is no longer, for a long time, a hypothesis. It has become a dimension of knowledge (just as much as the dimension of space). It is from now on the stuff of all the possible constructions of the Real--the general condition which every hypothesis must henceforth satisfy" (Letter to Père Felix Soignon, 13 February 1953).

It is not the place to discuss all the scientific difficulties which still adhere to the idea of evolution. We can say, however, that almost every scientist today holds to evolution as a fact, not merely as a probable theory. In other words, evolution is regarded as having the same reality as the very objects which it tries to explain. It is based upon a set of irreversible certitudes, which taken as a whole, render the truth of evolution irresistible.[58]

We have seen that Teilhard's whole intellectual product, indeed his entire life, is to make known, to have others see what he sees by the light of the fact of evolution.[59] Using evolution as the measure, as it were, he attempts to build up an entire world-view, coherent, unified, synthetic. Thus it is astonishing to read in a letter, dated 12 December 1919, and hence very early in the history of Teilhardian thought: "To diverse human constructions I attribute no definite and absolute value. I believe that they will disappear to be founded again upon something completely new and unimaginable."[60] It would seem that Teilhard repudiates outright what he sets out to accomplish. But not at all.

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[58] Cf. de Lubac, La pensée religieuse, p. 131.

> First, and despite certain appearances, the "Weltanschauung" that I propose in no way represents a fixed and closed system. It is not at all a question here (this would be ridiculous) of a deductive solution of the World, "à la Hegel," of a definitive order of truth.[61]

At all costs, Teilhard wishes to avoid a priorism, deductive causality and the closing of the human spirit for further investigation, believing itself once and for all in possession of a definite truth.[62] Such a method would be in direct opposition to the whole of the scientific method to which Teilhard is passionately devoted, in spite of his direct criticisms of it. Rather, the Teilhardian method is one of the discovery of the "axes of progression"[63] such as one finds in the study of evolution; "lines of penetration" by which one arrives at the truth of an unexplored reality. "I do not confer any 'divine stability' on the natural order. I would say rather that this order is characterized by a radical instability."[64] "The only stable factor in life which encapsulized each creature from the top to the bottom is its destiny (more or less actuated) to enter into the Pleroma, or to transitorily cooperate for this end."[65] Thus it would be a great mistake to suppose that

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[59] At the end of which, he wrote in "Le christique" (1955), p. 13: "How is it then that looking around me still intoxicated with what has appeared to me, I find myself almost the only one of my species, the only one to have seen? . . . incapable, when they ask me, to cite a single author, a single writing, where the marvelous 'diaphany' which for me has transfigured everything is recognized and has been clearly explained."

[60] Letter to A. Valensin, 12 December 1919 in Emile Rideau, La pensée du père Teilhard de Chardin (Paris: Seuil, 1965), p. 338.

[61] "Comment je vois," p. 1.

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[62] Preface to PH. "If this book is to be properly understood it must be read not as a work on metaphysics, still less as a sort of theological essay but purely and simply as a scientific treatise. . . . The pages which follow do not attempt to give an explanation of the world, but an introduction to such an explanation. . . . I have not tried to discover a system of ontological and causal relations between the elements of the universe, but only an experimental law of recurrence which would express their successive appearance in time" (OE, I, 21 [PH, p. 29]).

[63] Ibid.

[64] Letter to A. Valensin, 17 December 1919 in Rideau, p. 338.

[65] Letter of 29 December 1919 in Rideau, p. 338.

Teilhard himself believed that the Weltanschauung which he finally succeeded in outlining was a closed and completed system. The reason for this rests in the very heart of the Teilhardian method, a method which he characterized as dialectic.

The Teilhardian Dialectic

Three documents in particular demonstrate the Teilhardian dialectic: "Centrology: Essay on the Dialectic of Union" (1944),[66] "Outline of a Dialectic of Mind" (1946),[67] and the "Comment je vois" (1948).[68] In the second of these, an essay which is a summary of the whole Teilhardian viewpoint, Teilhard begins with the central fact of man, taken as a phenomenon among phenomena. Basing himself on arguments which we will later investigate further, he adds to this first stage of the dialectic the existence of a transcendent God. In the second phase, he shows how this God, the divine center, is not only a completion of the cone of human evolution, but is necessarily the "pull," a force of attraction in the evolutive process. Thus is revealed another characteristic of this God: he is the "Dieu moteur et révélateur." But a new phase begins with a new added fact:

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[66] OE, VII, 103-34. [67] Ibid., pp. 147-58.

[68] "Comment je vois."

the Christ-event, Jesus, who is God. The transcendent God become incarnate is also immanent. With this new knowledge, light is thrown in a fourth phase on an already known fact, the living church, which now takes its place at the very interior of the axis of evolution, being pulled upward to the divine pole whom we now recognize as the Christ-Omega.

Now while much of this terminology will clarify itself only after later study, I think the Teilhardian method is sufficiently disclosed as a movement from a more known fact to a lesser known fact. Study of each level will lead to other conclusions as each lesser known fact, newly discovered or further elaborated, throws light on other realities which hitherto seemed banal or of little importance. Thus Teilhard's sketch:

	The Known	The Less Known
Phase 1.	(1) Human Phenomenon	(2) Transcendent Omega
Phase 2.	(3) Evolutive Creation	(4) "Dieu Moteur et révélateur"
Phase 3.	(5) Christian Phenomenon	(6) Incarnated God
Phase 4.	(7) Living Church	(8) Christ-Omega[69]

The dialectic moves from (1) to (2), back to (3), higher to (4) and so forth. The same method is followed in, for example, "Comment je vois." The first part is a discussion in twenty-four paragraphs of "Physics" or "Phenomenology," beginning with the human phenomenon and its advances and concluding (again with a lesser known fact) with the "Directions of the Future and Point Omega," and the christian phenomenon. The second phase is "Metaphysics" and the third "Mystics" combines the first two parts into a final conclusion where the necessary connections are seen between the unravelling of life, super-reflexion, metaphysics of union, the universal-Christ, the mystique of centration, love of evolution, and the need of a super-humanity for a super-Christ.

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[69] OE, VII, 157.

Teilhard's dialectic forbids his world-vision from becoming closed and sterile. Rather it invites, and more strongly even, it demands continuous advances as the human mind oscillates back and forth from the more known to the less known, following a comprehensible axis of rationality and meaning, toward greater and more profound comprehension of cosmogenesis.[70] It is thus within the dialectic itself that one *sees*. For as the mind probes more and more deeply into the facts already presented to it, as it searches for a sign of unity and synthesis, it *sees* the key demanded for the explanation. This is why we have already noted that Teilhard begins sometimes with the most banal and overlooked facts. They are so simple, so ordinary, that we fail to *see* their significance, to realize that they themselves hold the key to problems which may have puzzled us. In the light of the new vision so acquired, a fresh look is taken at the contemporary scene, the ordinary fact; and the process begins anew, to terminate in a still more profound and widened vision of reality.

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[70] For further discussion of the Teilhardian dialectic cf. M. Barthelemy-Modaule, La personne et le drame humain chez Teilhaird de Chardin (Paris: Seuil, 1967). "The phenomenology of Teilhard de Chardin can be characterized as an endeavor to express the world as perfectly as possible in its totality and its external orientation by means of scientific experience. At the same time it is clear that his conception cannot be considered a closed and definitive system" (Wildiers, p. 23).

For example, in *The Phenomenon of Man*, after having described the gradual process of evolution until the arrival of man and thought on the earth, Teilhard writes: "Having reached the peak, we can now turn round and, looking downwards, take in the pattern of the whole in a glance. And this second check is decisive, and the harmony perfect."[71] The rest of the book analyzes the results of this "illumination." Teilhard is completely justified in emphasizing not only in the *Phenomenon*, but through all his writings:

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[71] *OE*, I, 245 (*PH*, p. 220).

> I repeat that my only aim in these pages--and to this aim all my powers are bent, is to *see*; that is, to say, to divulge a *homogenous* and *coherent* perspective of our general *extended* experience of man. . . . So please do not expect a final explanation of things here, nor a metaphysical system.[72]

The dialectic, as it were, requires openness for its very mechanism.

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[72] *OE*, I, 29 (*PH*, p. 35). Cf. also "Ma position intellectuelle": "Essentially the thought of Teilhard de Chardin is not expressed as a metaphysics but as a kind of phenomenology" (p. 1). "Being concerned with the levels and order of succession revealed by these phenomena, I shall not deal with their deep causality. Perhaps I shall risk an ultra-physical excursus. But look for no metaphysics here . . . what I am putting before you are suggestions rather than affirmations. My principal objective is not to convert you to ideas which are still fluid but to open avenues for you to make you think" (*OE*, III, 306).

"If you could know how I feel the need to feel solid earth beneath my steps--and then to commune with a movement (reflexion) not with a system!" (Letter to Richard, 17 February 1952). "And in all this, note well, no metaphysics, but all the more a 'hyperphysics' seeking to grasp, *without* leaving the phenomenal, the totality or at least the principal axis (capable of extrapolation) of the Phenomenon. We need metaphysics as we need geometry, of course--to systematize and direct at every moment our awareness of the universe. But the only thing that counts and that works finally is our increasingly more confident and reflective adherence to the process of cosmo- bio- noo- genesis in which we find ourselves in virtue of our existence" (Letter to Père Felix Soignon, 13 February 1953). "Remember that I absolutely refuse to do 'metaphysics' (i.e., to *deduce* the world from certain a priori principles). I attempt to do only a phenomenology (in the etymological sense of the word, not in the sense of Husserl and company)" (Letter to Francois A. Viallet, 15 December 1953). "In other terms I am a pure 'phenomenalist,' interested in recognizing about me in the universe a general law of recurrence to which I conform myself--but extremely distrustful of all 'illuminism' and all 'metaphysics'" (Letter to de Buttafoco, 11 November 1950).

There remain but two final remarks about the Teilhardian method. We have already insisted upon its synthetic quality. But we ought to guard against thinking of Teilhard as a kind of concordist. Rather it is coherence that he seeks. If his attempt is to reconcile what appear to be opposing ideas, this is not accomplished haphazardly or artificially. Rather the inner meanings and drives are examined to see how opposing concepts actually shed light one upon the other, and in most cases complement each other in specifying a further truth. Thus Teilhard warned:

> We all know in the history of ideas certain puerile, premature reconciliations which, mixing the plans and the sources of knowledge, end up only as unstable arrangements, because [they are] monstrous. But these caricatures of harmony ought not to make us forget that the essential criterion, the specific mark of Truth is to be able to develop itself indefinitely, not only without ever developing an internal contradiction, but also in forming a positively constructed ensemble, where the parts support and complement each other ever more perfectly. On a sphere, it would be absurd (concordism) to confuse the meridians with the equator; but at the pole (coherence), these same meridians ought, by structural necessity, to join each other.[73]

No statement could more distinctly summarize both the dialectical method, the openness of truth, and the thrust of Teilhard's attempt toward coherence.

It would not be necessary to list every reference to the future found in the work of Teilhard. But it is important to note why the future held such importance for him. It is simply because "there is only one real method of discovering (as we learn from historical research); it is to build the future."[74] As Teilhard moved on in age, he became more and more attracted by the future and less and less by the past.[75] The topics he treated from 1945 until his death in 1955 show his increasing interest in the future: "Christianity and Evolution" which showed future possibilities opened by a real love of evolution; "Human Planetization" (1945) and what it holds for the future; "Ecumenism" (1946); "Some Reflections on the Spiritual Repercussions of the Atom Bomb" (1946) and how it heralds the arrival of a new spirit; "Faith in Peace" (1947); "The Spiritual

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[73] "Comment je vois," p. 1.

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[74] Letter to Joseph, 14 September 1935, MM, p. 209.

[75] "It's perfectly simple, but there are still so many people who behave as though the past were interesting in itself and treat it as only the future deserves to be treated" (Ibid., p. 88). "Here I keep busy although not always in scientific issues proper. There is so much to think and to talk of about present man!" (In Eng., Letter to Hallam Movius, 11 March 1939.) "So many thoughts we have to exchange, concerning man past and present" (Letter to Movius, 22 January 1948). "For a long time, it is much less the past than the future (biological) of humanity which occupies me and excites me" (Letter to Dr. Salzes, 11 September 1951). "But less and less I feel the past as such does not interest me. It is still vital, at this moment, to fix certain points at the origin of the curve of Hominisation. But it is truly and only the present allure of this trajectory in us and around us that is essential for our generation to determine" (Letter to Mlle. Mortier, 10 September 1951).

Contribution of the Far East" (1947) and the future of religion; "Faith in Man" (1947); "The Directions and Conditions of the Future" (1948); "The Psychological Conditions for Human Unification" (1948); "On the Probable Coming of an 'Ultra-Humanity'" (1950); "How May We Conceive and Hope that Human Unanimization Will Be Realized on Earth" (1950); "From the Pre-Human to the Ultra-Human" (1951); "The Christian Phenomenon" (1950); "The Convergence of the Universe" (1951); "The Transformation and Prolongations in Man of the Mechanism of Evolution" (1951); "The End of the Species" (1952); "Reflections on Human Convergence" (1953); "Death Barrier and Co-Reflection" (1955); "Research, Work and Adoration" (1955).

But even very early, Teilhard lived for the future simply because the future is obviously evolution's movement; it is the less known; it is open and waiting.[76]

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[76] "Today, what counts for me (as for you) is the Future of things" (Letter to Abbé Breuil, 16 July 1923). "The world is interesting only up ahead, but seen from this side, it is exciting" (Letter to Abbé Breuil, 23 October 1923). "In spite of the sweetness, always melancholic, which brings us to look backward, it is toward the future that we ought to turn our eyes, for it is there that both the Christian faith and the more particular faith which we both have in the progress of a great work around us is calling us" (Letter to Abbé Breuil, 27 November 1923).

The past exists in order to enlighten the future; it gives the guidelines, sketches the possibilities. Only to the future can we abandon ourselves.

The investigation of the future is an integral part of the Teilhardian method. It accentuates the utilization of synthesis rather than analysis as the basic methodology in discovery and experimentation. Teilhard's appreciation of this method dates back to the earliest years in the construction of his vision; and it is best expressed in a lecture given in Paris, 27 February 1921, entitled "Science and Christ, or Analysis and Synthesis."[77] Men know, Teilhard begins, that to be more, man must know more. Thus in and through knowledge, men thought they would be able to discover the very secret of being, the dwelling-place of the gods, by searching out the inmost recesses, the most inaccessible and farthest reaches of the earth. But even before the age of exploration which demonstrated this searching endeavor, man realized that he would never be able to discover the depths of reality except by penetrating beyond his own sphere into the very heart of things. And while most people never really ask the question at all, those who do begin the search by analysis, by taking apart. The benefits, of course, have been enormous and are not to be denied. But the result is often the belief that the very key to reality is contained within its elements and that he who controls the elements controls reality.

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[77] OE, IX, 45-62.

Now we recognize that matter is essentially plurality,[78] and that to continue on the road of analysis is to continue toward nothingness. The obvious reaction would be a movement in the opposite direction toward spirit, toward synthesis. We have thus learned through analysis that "to attain the luminous, solid, absolute zone of the world, it is not a question of going toward the most profound beneath or the furthest behind, but toward the most interior in the soul and the newest in the future."[79] We know that the elementary, the past, these are as empty of mystery as the continents and ocean depths are now that we are able to describe them and exploit them.[80] "It is a mirage that makes you see the secret of beings in their origin."[81] The only way to really understand being is to move on ahead, to search for that force which mysteriously attracts beings onward.[82] We must avoid the "analytic illusion," which materializes spirit, and reestablish the "synthetic effect."[83]

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[78] A notion to be further elucidated in chap. iv.

[79] OE, IX, 156.

[80] "Let us not lose the view that the Totality is worth more than the sum of its parts. A plant represents more than the sum of its chemical elements. So the world as well represents more than the sum of the beings one finds there and consequently it is insufficient to assemble the results of the different natural sciences to obtain a faithful image of what the world represents in reality" (Wildiers, p. 31).

[81] OE, IX, 56.

Nothing could be more ironic than a paleontologist essentially attracted toward the future. And yet that is the very lesson which Teilhard learned and which he wished to pass on; the study of the past teaches that only the future has a real importance in itself. I think it obvious, too, that this attraction for the future widens the concept of science. When Teilhard insists that he is doing nothing but science,[84] we are obliged to take him at his word. The conclusion ought to be: this is a new kind of science, a science with a wider base. It is what Teilhard himself called a "Hyperphysics."[85] The inability to accept a development in the concept of science, as well as in its methodology, to include a future-oriented and synthesis-building thrust, is precisely what paralyzes science today and condemns it to amassing huge deposits of information, for all practical purposes useless, because unintegrated in a synthetic viewpoint. But if one can see and accept that science, too, as every other human endeavor, ought and must grow and develop if it intends to remain relevant and living, then one can more easily understand the Teilhardian method. In fact, the essence of science for Teilhard is research, and research presupposes a penchant toward the future. The future, always somewhat obscure, today seems even more beyond our reach than ever. Discouraged, some talk of arresting or limiting the attack. But Teilhard responds: "Draw back? Never!"[86] Our basic intuition is correct; we have but to reorient ourselves.

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[82] Cf. OE, VI, 213 ff.

[83] OE, VII, 145.

[84] OE I, 21 (PH, pp. 29-30).

[85] OE I, 22 (PH, p. 20); cf. also, OE, III, 306, 217).

What we have explained of Teilhard already goes beyond not only the ordinary beliefs of the average man, but lies well outside of the speculations of many intellectuals. There is first a certain incapacity, or perhaps only an unwillingness, to confront the contemporary world.[87] Or even more accurately, one confronts it with only a partial vision, myopically. And seeing nothing there to please the eye, one turns away in disgust, nausea, and anxiety. This is man's refusal to see all of reality, to accept it, and only then to come to make a judgment upon it. This is the temptation: to believe that one can start from scratch. In fact, there is no tabula rasa for the human mind.[88] Yet this acceptance is most often, and probably of necessity, based not upon proofs and evidences, but upon convictions and beliefs, perhaps already present in the beholder. Hence Teilhard refers so often to his own vision as a faith: how I believe, faith in man, faith in peace, faith in the world, faith in matter, etc.[89] And this is why the Teilhardian vision is utterly opposed to any kind of positivism and skepticism which regards faith as unworthy of man and especially of the man of science. We can assert that the acceptance of faith as part of the human experience is merely another aspect of the acceptance of total reality, in lieu of the pick-and-choose system of the modern positivist, pluralist and existentialist. Faith is as much a part of reality as is racial pride and hatred a part of the modern world. The scientist or the philosopher who fails to take human faith into account is as much doomed to failure in his mission as the diplomat who ignores the reality of racial strain.

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[86] OE, VI, 218. [87] OE, VI, 323.

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[88] Cf. Rahner, Science, Evolution et Pensée Chrétienne, p. 18.

[89] "From century to century man develops a certain Weltanschauung (as additive and irresistible as any evolution), of planetary dimensions and urgency; and this Weltanschauung is not purely rational coherence; it involves passion and faith" (Letter to Rideau, 13 June 1952).

This much said by way of introduction, we are prepared to launch into some of the ramifications and consequences of the Teilhardian adventure, investigating first, in Chapter IV, the scientific presuppositions and laws which Teilhard makes use of as underpinnings and starting points. We can detail man's place in nature so as to discover the role he is to play in the universal drama. In Chapter V, the relations enjoyed between man and man will be discussed, to be followed in Chapter VI by an exposition of man's relation to God. Only then in the chapters which follow will we be prepared to discuss the full consequences and the essence of the idea-system of Teilhard de Chardin.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOIL OF THE STARS

> A host of scholars are occupied with human anatomy, psychology, physiology and sociology. A number of others are examining the properties or history of life and infra-human substances. Now hardly any effort has yet really been made to harmonize these two domains. Though the human and non-human are intimately linked in nature, we persistently look on them from two completely different points of view; in practice if not in theory, researchers and thinkers almost always act as if even viewed by science (although it is only concerned with appearances and antecedents) man were a certain universe, and what is not man, another.[1]

The title of Teilhard's most famous (and yet one of his most difficult) works is The Phenomenon of Man. It was written precisely with this aim in mind--to harmonize the two universes of man and not-man and to show that man is not a cosmos by himself, but part of a cosmogenesis. There are four other similar articles existing alongside at least sixteen essays which bear directly on this problem. The first "Human Phenomenon" appeared in 1928, the last in 1954--a span equal in length to the whole development of the Teilhardian synthesis. Placing man beyond the normal development of the universe, treating him as an epi-phenomenon, regarding man as a kind of scientific embarrassment--this seems to have astonished Teilhard's own scientific sense, so much so that the effort to understand why and then to remedy the situation occupied a large portion of his intellectual life, and we can assert with little hesitation that man's rightful place in nature holds a position of equal importance with the concept of evolution as the two pillars of Teilhardian thought.

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[1] OE, III, 77-78.

Were it not for the harsh reminders of reality, it would be inconceivable for Teilhard's synthesizing mind to imagine an explanation of the universe without man's occupying its central position of intelligibility. Nevertheless, complains Teilhard, this is exactly what is done and almost no one attempts to do anything about it. One by one, all the compartments of human knowledge and of the world have fallen under the magic influence of science and the idea of evolution--except man.[2] This fear of a profound and serious scientific approach to the study of man as a phenomenon among phenomena has an understable foundation. It is a fear of falling into metaphysics (on the side of the positivists) or of somehow defiling the soul and spiritual qualities of man by falsely subjecting them to material laws.[3] Thus many people do study man, but not in what makes him precisely human, that is, the power of reflection. Therefore the paradox: a science of man and a science of nature, but not a science of man in nature.[4]

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[2] OE, IX, 117 ff.

[3] OE, III, 228 (VP, p. 162).

Historically there have been three fundamental modes of viewing man in his relation to nature: (1) as the center of an immobile universe, a position hardly tenable since the Galilean-Darwinian-Freudian revolutions; (2) as something unusual, of no special interest or of slight significance vis-a-vis the infinite and the infinitesimal of the universe itself. That is, life and man are so puny, so improbable, the result of such a mere game of chance, that they could hardly hold the key to the scientific explanation of reality. (3) As the most significant and principal figure in a world in movement, that is, the center of an evolutive universe.[5] Now it is to this latter that Teilhard himself subscribes. Accepting the fact of evolution, he looks at the contemporary world and its mechanistic appraisals, and finds man somehow unhappily and unexplainedly lacking. Yet man and all his characteristics are really the most common things that we know. The most banal, the most obvious fact of all for man, is man himself. Only one way is open: man must be included in the world-view which purports to carry a realistic portrait of contemporary man.[6]

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[4] "Essai d'integration de l'homme dans l'univers," p. 2.

[5] Cf. OE, III, 505 ff. (VP, p. 162).

A first initiative in the direction of opening up, widening, and transforming the present explanations of the universe is an expansion of the laws which govern the infra-human zones.[7] What these laws are and how they operate will thus be our next project.

The Law of Complexity/Consciousness

The Weltstoff,[8] the basic alienated matter of the universe, overwhelms us with its *plurality*, appearing in myriad drops of rain and particles of sand. Modern science has demonstrated time and again that the universe is indeed made of cosmic dust, billions of individual and particular elements. At the same time, however, these elements are in many ways unified, forming a kind of totality or collective unity. And even more interesting, they have the capacity for action and interaction. On a higher level, we also know that matter taken as a whole exhibits the same qualities as matter taken in its individual particles. Because matter is plural it exhibits a certain system of action--and it is this system which science day by day makes more intelligible for us. Yet at the same time, each interaction, each combination is somehow unique, and the grand order of matter as totality can only be seen in the ensemble. Sphere upon sphere--from the electrons to the stars, "these multiple zones of the cosmos envelop without imitating each other." So that the very pattern of the universe is the universe itself.[9]

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[6] "Until now, man, in what is truly his essentially, has been left out of all the scientific constructions of nature. In the eyes of some, his 'scientific' value is too high to be able to be integrated without a kind of sacrilege, in the general process of history. In the eyes of others, his faculty of choice and abstraction is too far removed from material determinisms to be able, even usefully to associate it to the elements of which the physical is built. In both cases, either by an excess of admiration, or in default of esteem, man is left floating above or rejected in the margin of the universe--uprooted or accessory. He who makes science rests outside of the objects of science. This is the source of all our current intellectual and moral problems. We will never understand either man or nature, if in conformity to the facts which cry out to us, we do not plunge completely (but without destroying) the one into the heart of the other" (*OE*, VI, 26).

[7] *OE*, IX, 115.

[8] Cf. Madeleine Barthelemy-Madaule, *Bergson et Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: Seuil, 1963), pp. 239-54, 295-302, 112-28.

Similarly, the concept of energy changes on this level of the totality. The single action of a simple particle extends itself to all other particles in every direction. The domain of action for each article is the universe itself so that a single item in some way is the center of the world; and the universe itself can be seen as a quantum of energy.[10]

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[9] OE, I, 38-41 (PH, pp. 40-46).

Now add to these basic assertions the idea of evolution and a new picture of the universe begins to take shape. In all of the present theories, evolution in matter means the gradual building of increasingly complex elements, that is, matter appears in the state of genesis: from the first state of granulation forward to the atomic constituents, then atoms, molecules, etc. Furthermore science has been able to discover two basic laws which govern the energetic transmission within these complexifying transformations: (1) the Conservation of Energy through which we can verify, at least apparently, that nothing in nature is constructed without the price of an equivalent destruction, that is, the universe is a closed quantum of energy; the energy for a transformation here must be taken from some destruction there; (2) the Dissipation of Energy or the Law of Entropy: physico-chemistry shows that for every transformation, a fraction of useful energy is lost in the form of heat. The more the quantum functions, the more it wears itself down. Thus the universe in complexifying itself uses itself up and quite naturally falls into a pattern of more and more probable combinations as a method of conserving energy.

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[10] "It is worthwhile performing the salutary exercise which consists in starting from the most personalized zones of our consciousness and following the prolongations of our being throughout the world. We shall be astonished at the extent of the intimacy of our relationship with the universe. Where are the roots of our being? In the first place they plunge back and down into the unfathomable past. . . . How impossible to decipher the synthesis of successive influences in which we are ever incorporated! In each one of us, through matter, the whole history of the world is in part reflected" (OE, IV, 45 [The Divine Milieu (New York: Harper, 1960), p. 27. Hereafter cited as DM]. OE, I, 40-41 [PH, pp. 45-46]).

Logic demands, however, the consideration of a whole other side of the universe which heretofore has been left on the fringes of the discussion. This is the interior face of the universe; science has not yet spoken a word about thought and its place in the total universe. That this interior side (its "within," as it were) of the universe exists, is again one of those facts so obvious, but most often overlooked. Overlooked, it is easy to see, in the realm of physics and chemistry. But more difficult to overlook in the vegetal world, and impossible in insects, vertebrates, and above all in man. Now if we are to apply the characteristics we have already seen to be true of the "without" of the universe, it is obvious that thought will have immense implications and repercussions. It will mean that the "within" will have cosmic dimensions; that in some way, on every level, in every sphere of the universe, there will be some sort of within, consciousness, thought, mind, spontaneity.[11]

Three conclusions follow from this discovery: first, atomicity becomes a common property of both the within and the without of the universe; second, just as we are unable to trace to the very beginnings the most infinitesimal particles of matter, so the first apparitions of consciousness are lost in the shadows. And third, the growth of consciousness, that is the growth of centers of freedom and awareness, is nothing but another facet of the same phenomenon as the growth of complexity. Thus we have arrived at a law which is applicable to all spheres of the universe: the Law of Complexity/Consciousness.

Applying the laws operating in the without of the universe to the discovery of its interior dimension, it appears that corresponding to the physical energy of the cosmos there is a spiritual energy. The most serious difficulty here, however, is their interrelation. Are the two energies possibly simply one and the same? The evidence seems to indicate a negative reply. For example, only a small amount of physical energy is used for activities requiring tremendous amounts of spiritual energy (for example, food demanded for intellectual output is often at a minimum). On the other hand, if both physical and spiritual energy are regarded as both fundamentally of a psychic nature, then a solution seems to appear. On the one side is tangential energy which renders all the elements of the same order concatenated in the universe (it acts between "centers"); on the other side is radial energy, moving each element in the direction of the more complex and more centered, that is, forward.[12] Science until now has devoted itself to considering only tangential energy. And perhaps rightly so because if energy (both tangential and radial) is gradually increasing in proportion to the increasing complexity of the universe, we have arrived at a principle contrary to the principle of the Conservation of Energy. But only in the most highly elevated cases of centreity does radial energy increase in noticeable proportions. So that for the present level of science, no noticeable sum of radial energy interferes with the physical laws.

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[11] Although, of course, in an analogous (but nonetheless real) way. Cf. Robert T. Francoeur, "Evolution and Panpsychism in Teilhard de Chardin," American Benedictine Review, XII (1961), 206-15.

It seems clear from all that has already been said that the primitive earth contained not only simple chemical substances which increased in complexity to form crystals, then molecules in ever growing synthesis, but it also contained the germs of "pre-life," that is, a basic kind of consciousness in proportion to the increasing complexity of the material "without" side of the earth. The coming of life is announced by the appearance of the cell whose physical structure need not involve us here. But we can remember that the cell is a real novelty, a true revolution in the development of the universe. On the external side, the originality of the cell consists in its ability to organize a large amount of matter in a single, working unit. In its complexity, it repeats all the transformations which occurred before it; yet it itself is something different. But the cell also represents an internal revolution. It is not surely the first appearance of consciousness,[13] for we have already seen that this existed in various "pre-" forms before the cell. The change was rather a metamorphosis, a change in the manner in which radial energy expresses itself. It is possible that the radial energy became a "centered surface" rather than merely a closed surface; a sphere instead of a circle. Nevertheless, such a metamorphosis means a veritable revolution in the nature of the universe.[14]

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[12] Cf. OE, II, 363 ff. (The Appearance of Man [New York: Harper, 1965], pp. 265 ff. Hereafter cited as AM); OE, I, 62 ff. (PH, pp. 64 ff.).

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[13] Rather, the first appearance of this kind of consciousness.

It little matters how and where this revolution took place. What is important is that the very earliest cell-life of which we are aware is already infinitely complex. And further, this cell-life is ordered not by chance, but by an interrelated and very evident common life; not a "foam" but a "film" of life. So that across the globe appears a new sphere, the sphere of life or biosphere. Furthermore, we know that there were an infinite number of attempts at combinations, but also that a kind of order was followed in the evolution: vitamins, enzymes, etc. did not appear merely haphazardly. When the full weight of the life-revolution finally takes its effect, we see the immense importance of life and the value it has for the history of the universe.[15]

A living cell is characterized by six primary movements: reproduction; multiplication (reproduction in geometric proportion--unchecked in principle); renovation (multiplication without disintegration); conjugation (intensification of multiplication and diversification); association (groupings into kinds of society); and controlled additivity (a determined sense in the growth). Thus all life taken at all levels shows a tendency to reckless self-reproduction and extreme profusion. It gropes its way to a specific target by an infinite number of combinations. Life struggles for survival with a kind of inherent cleverness and ingenuity. Indifferent to every individual unity or group of units which cannot adapt to its future directedness and totality, there is a cruelty in the inexorable movement of life. And yet, beyond all of this, life forms a kind of global unit: it is a whole.

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[14] Cf. OE, I, 75-97 (PH, pp. 78-92).

[15] Cf. OE, I, 97-100 (PH, pp. 92-96).

Taking all these characteristics both of individual life and life as a whole, what is the picture of the now living earth? The basic movement of the living mass is ramification (divergence). The evolutionary thrust is clear here--living groups move along axes of diversification called phyla which in themselves are real collective realities, as real as the individual cells or life groups which create them. At the same time a phylum can have a number of differing forms; it is less quantitative than structural. Finally, it appears only in time and thus can be fully understood only in relation to duration.

The first step in the ramification of life is the establishment of a phylum by a group of living beings by means of an initial angle of divergence from its neighbors. The first temporal task of the phylum is to devote itself to inner perfection. Through a kind of groping the phylum discovers its most economic and best adapted forms of survival. Then, having reached a certain level of perfection, it begins its stage of conquest, starving out or in other ways destroying its weaker neighbors. But at the same time, its own disjunction begins, as verticils of the phylum strike out on their own angle of divergence. The picture of the mature phylum is a verticil of consolidated forms, since ramification on this secondary level is arrested rather quickly. Then begins the final phase, the phase of socialization in which the new verticils associate more and more intimately with each other, and the phylum gains full maturity in greater coherence and more profound richness.

Actually this is merely a theoretical view of what in reality has happened. What we see today are simply the effects of temporal distance. Because of conquest and death, the phyla we now investigate seem exaggeratedly dispersed. Further, it is impossible to recreate or to prove the initial lines of phyletic divergence since of their nature these first buds or peduncles are destined to be displaced by more mature forms.

Through a generalized study of the various levels and phyla of life we have diagrammed before us a tree of life which can picture only approximately (and in fact, in negative, because it cannot show those forms which tried and failed) the vast numbers, volume and duration of the biosphere. That the tree was born, that it grew is undoubted; the evidence is clear. The important question, however, is whether this tree can bear fruit. Does it have a direction, a goal?

Most scientists answer in the negative. And yet Teilhard insists that it is difficult to believe that we could construct the tree of life without there being at least some vague sort of directedness. A closer study will lead to the discovery of evolution's axis. This parameter can be found in the "within" of things, where the very essence of reality is located. In the confusion of change which seems to characterize life, it is difficult to trace the development of those combinations which are associated with true variations in psychism. However, the nervous system does seem to provide a clearer measure. The establishment of the nervous system corresponds to an interior development of psychism. Here there is no lack of evidence. As we have seen, nevertheless, a new layer in the directed process of evolution only occurs by means of, or along with, profound adjustments in the tension as a whole--as, for example, with the appearance of life and the establishment of the biosphere. The movement of evolution is not a simple march toward the complex; rather it moves in leaps, qualitative changes corresponding to quantitative changes.

Now if we are to trace the axis of evolution using these criteria (that is, degree of consciousness and the development of the nervous system) our choice must fall upon the primates, which are differentiated from all other mammals by the cranial cavity. They seem to be the freest phylum, the phylum with the purest and most direct cerebralization. It is thus through them that we can expect the next great evolutionary change.[16]

Hominization

We need make no great efforts to affirm that reflection is man's distinctive quality, granting him a special position in the universe. Man's ability to possess himself as an object--only man knows that he knows; only man can take himself as the center of his reflection--this is the real innovation, the second universal revolution. A threshold has been passed in the history of the cosmos.

What does the hominization of the individual mean? That is, what does the appearance of thought mean to the individual in the cosmos? It means that this individual becomes a psychic center, a center of radial energy. Instinct, which existed already in all forms below man (that is, a hominized individual), now becomes intellect. Or, in another way, intellect is the highest form of instinct. Along the radial axis, a leap was made, for there is now a qualitative difference between intellect and instinct, even if the two lie along the same evolutionary continuum. Further, this change occurred in a single stroke. There is no point at which there is a demi-hominized individual. There is then no missing link, partially sub-human, partially human. Either an individual is hominized (that is, he thinks) or he is not (he cannot think). But man, as every other branch on the tree of life, must survive. Aside from the obvious physical necessities which attach to him as a biological entity, man's principal method of survival is personalization or the hominization of his environment.

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[16] Cf. OE, I, 115-75 (PH, pp. 112-60).

On the phyletic level, what is the meaning of hominization? Outwardly, there seems to be little change on earth. The metamorphosis is indeed more subtle. We have, for example, only begun exploring the interaction of anatomy and psychology to investigate the close connection between the within and the without in individuals. But among men on the same level, this connection is shown in phyletic growth. Men are social, they seek each other, and by so doing, mankind, humanity, the human phylum, grows.[17] We are aware that apart from ourselves as individual thinking entities, there is something which develops outside, but along side of ourselves. This something which is accumulated and passed on to further generations in the phylum is tradition, which is the phyletic memory of the human group. The task of this tradition is the hominization of the biological and interior past of man, so that with humanity, while all the basic biological needs continue to exist--sex, nourishment, struggle for survival--they are evolutionarily transformed. A single, simple conclusion follows. Just as the appearance of life enveloped the globe with a new sphere, so the appearance of thought: the noosphere.

Appearing already after thousands of years of development, man is first observed as a group. And his portrait takes on a social significance when his remarkable gift of reflection is seen in its evolutionary setting. It is clear that man has become the most powerful being in the universe; within a few hundred thousand years he has covered the earth; that is, he has been able to vanquish almost every enemy, subduing the universe to his own needs in a period of time relatively brief vis-a-vis the development of other phyla. In the interior of this sphere which man creates around the globe, he has built a wonderful cohesion and organization. So that

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[17] Cf. OE, II, 327 ff. (AM, pp. 235 ff.); also OE, VII, 67-81.

> from the most coldly positivistic viewpoint, the phenomenon of man represents at the very least a general transformation of the earth by the establishment on its surface of a new envelope, the thinking envelope; more vibrant and a better conductor in a sense, than any metal; more fluid than any liquid; more expansive than any gas; more assimilative and more sensitive than all organic matter.[18]

Through the power granted him by reflection, man renders the whole earth co-extensive with his domain. Reflection becomes planetized--it knows no other limits but the limits of the universe itself.[19] The appearance

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[18] OE, III, 231 (VP, p. 164).

[19] This is what Teilhard calls the "astro-biological" point of view in regard to life (cf. OE, II, 319 [AM, p. 225]).

"Reading Newman's He and I for the first time, I had the same impression as you, and I applied the same corrective: 'I' is not an entity isolated from all relations; it is, in a way, the whole universe centered on me, whose destiny (in a very true sense) is played out in me (in God's eyes isn't every soul worth the whole world, isn't it the whole world? . . .) Thus, in this essential confrontation of God and me, I feel every creature behind me. . . . And so the fundamental primacy of Homo sapiens is not the end of hominization, but merely the beginning of a new phase, characterized by a radical change in the planetary economy brought about by the eruption of reflection on the world.[20]

The origins of the human phylum are of course a blank. Like every beginning, time has obliterated them. This is an essential law of evolution: "First, and in one manner or another, every birth corresponds to a discontinuity or jump (quantum)--of a nature and extent that varies with each case."[21] The zone preceding the birth tends to become effaced by duration. Yet while we are unable to observe this preliminary phase, we can assert that it was nothing else but a reshuffling of genes, following the general law of complexity-consciousness. Thus the human group springs from the biosphere by normal speciation.

The next step in the ramification of the human phyletic base offers us precious little more for investigation. But we do know that it followed the anthropoid movements in Africa and sub-Himalayan Asia, and

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of individual salvation leaves the soul all its fullness, as far-reaching as the Universe" (Génèse, p. 215 [MM, p. 167]).

[20] Cf. OE, II, 212 ff. (AM, pp. 153 ff.).

[21] OE, II, 152 (AM, p. 136).

that it comprised a mosaic of small, independent groups. (There are at least, for example, six forms of Pithecanthropos.[22]) Now the appearance of Homo sapiens is a veritable explosion. He appears already in the form of races (white, yellow, black). And by Neolithic times he is in possession of the entire earth, including America, with an agricultural and commercial population. At the present stage, the fifth[23] step is made with the industrialization and unification of the world. Man's "prise de pouvoir" has indeed changed the very face of the earth. No longer does it appear green and blue from its vegetation and its oceans. Rather, "to a distant observer, able to make it out more clearly, it would appear at this moment luminous with thought."[24]

Nevertheless, while the growth of the human branch on the tree of life followed the normal biological laws of speciation, we are obliged to note as well the special and central position occupied by man on that tree. The hominids and their organization of their phylum which we call civilization are not of equal value with any other branch. Rather they are at the head of the principal axis of growth, constituting the arrow of evolution. The fundamental thrust of evolution is toward spontaneity and consciousness. With man actual reflection is attained, and in man we discover the furthest advance of life. To arrive at this point, it was necessary that evolution pass a critical threshold. So that--despite all that binds him to the past--between man and all that precedes him, there is a change of state, a break. Thus, although man is not an epi- or para-phenomenon, he is a phenomenon of the first order. Qualitatively, he is the center and the most advanced expression of that energy which enlivens the entire universe.[26] Quantitatively, he covers the globe, forming the thinking envelope or noosphere.[27]

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[22] OE, II, 202-03 (AM, pp. 145-46).

[23] Pithecanthropian, Stone Age, Neanderthal, Neolithic, "Modern."

[24] OE, III, 231 (VP, p. 164).

How can we interpret the human phenomenon in the light of the scientific knowledge we have already established concerning the evolution of the universe? First let us consider the law of entropy. We should note that it is not simply a law like any other. Rather it "expresses a universal tendency of material phenomena throughout time. It explains a historical current

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[25] OE, III, 234 (VP, p. 166).

[26] Cf. OE, III, 289 ff. (VP, pp. 245 ff.).

[27] Cf. OE, IX, 124-25.

through an algebraic formula: the advance of matter towards the most probable conditions and arrangements."[28] Yet we have already seen that even on the organic physico-chemical level arrangements tend to be constructed toward more improbable structures of incredible complexity. Thus with the arrival of thought in the universe, man appears to be "supported by a giddy scaffolding of improbabilities, to which each new progress adds a new platform."[29] The first reaction is quite normally that mind, precisely because it is so improbable, must be studied separately, left on the fringes of science. But there is another, more logical, and even more scientific viewpoint which can be adopted. That is, if the universe shows us two contradictory movements, one toward the more probable (entropy) and one toward the less (complexity), we can posit (as we did in the case of universal psychic energy) two faces of the same generality. In fact, in this view life becomes the inverse of entropy. A problem remains only if we view life merely as far as its pre-human stages. Then it truly is improbable, unstable, and fragile. But if we have learned the lesson of the human phenomenon and have understood the real power inherent in human reflection, then we can more readily understand that life as expressed in man is a sui-generis power of the world. Then, in fact, it is reflection which is the inverse of entropy.

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[28] OE, III, 234 (VP, p. 168).

[29] Ibid.

Hence, civilization as presented to us by history is a prolongation of the same socialization we have seen on the infra-human level. Two elements can be ascertained: a socio-economic arrangement (that is, a material element), and a kind of intensification of human thought itself (that is, a psychic element). By habit and often quite unconsciously, we separate cellular arrangements from human arrangements, designating the one organic and natural, and the other artificial. One is to be treated by biologists, the other by historians and jurists. Yet applying the law of complexity-consciousness, the so-called artificial arrangements become but the prolongations of more highly elevated corpuscular ensembles. Thus, "the rise of civilization is nothing but the organo-physical aspect adapted by a colossal biological operation never before attempted in nature: the independent arrangement, not only (as in the insects, for example) of a simple familial group, but of a vast group of living groups: I mean of a whole phylum (and a phylum of planetary extension)."[30] The full implications of this conclusion will be seen in later chapters. But it is not too early to indicate that there will be possibilities of further growth along the same axis, following again the universal law of increasing complexity-consciousness.

Several conclusions can be made concerning evolution and its mechanism now that we have arrived at the level of reflection in the history of the universe. What new perspectives can be perceived in evolution itself? Most obvious of all is that evolution has a meaning, it makes sense. Not only does it go on aggregating ever more and more complex forms, but we understand now that this complexity is in function with the degree of spontaneity possessed by the aggregate itself. The sense behind evolution is reflection. In a certain manner, it could be said that evolution is its own sense, for as Huxley remarked, and Teilhard often repeated, man is evolution become conscious of itself.[31] As we shall see, a reverse analytical investigation will make it much clearer that only through and with reflection can any axis at all be perceived in the movement of evolution. When thought bursts out on the world, the inner meaning of evolution is manifested. It is a movement toward greater centreity, greater liberty, fuller consciousness, more freedom, which renews the face of the earth.[32]

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[30] OE, II, 216 (AM, pp. 155-56).

[31] OE, I, 244 (PH, p. 220).

The inclusion of the human phenomenon into the general theory of evolution also manifests the inherent unity in the evolutionary flow. Far from leaving man off somewhere to the side as too insignificant for consideration, too inexplicable for scientific precisions, or too ineffable to tamper with, by means of this new point of view the whole cosmos takes on a unity, appearing to us as a complete Whole, a real Totality in which all elements are accorded their due position and level of importance. Man confers a meaning on the universe; the universe on man.[33] In this way, a number of hitherto believed insoluble dichotomies are disposed of, among them being, the dangerous and inexplicable duality of Matter/Spirit overcome in the philosophy of creative union. In a striking way, then, "the universe and man confer on one another, in a reciprocal but non-symmetric fashion, a consistence in regard to thought, a cohesion and a significance."[34]

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[32] "Energies of a psychic nature everywhere control the development of life, and man by his thought has renewed the face of the earth" (OE, III, 222 (VP, p. 159).

[33] ". . . man confers a consistence on the Universe because the presence of man, his coming, upset the idea of an evolution which would be an indefinite derivation, empty of any sense: the history of the universe is first centered around man, before receiving its infinite significance in Christ. But, reciprocally, the universe confers on man a first consistency", (C. d'Armagnac, "De Bergson à Teilhard . . .," Études, February, 1964, p. 169. Cited by Rideau, Pensée de Teilhard de Chardin, p. 102).

Creative Union

Teilhard's "philosophy of union," while operating throughout all of his intellectual life because it was an obvious outgrowth of the synthetic character of his dialectic thought, found its principal expressions in two widely separated periods: 1916-1919 and 1944-1955. In "My Universe"[35] Teilhard remarked that the "philosophy" of creative union is a result of reflection on the disconcerting relations between matter and spirit:

> Creative union . . . is not exactly a metaphysical doctrine. It is really rather a sort of empirical and pragmatic explanation of the Universe, born in me from the need to conciliate, in a solidly linked system, the scientific views of Evolution (admitted as definitive in their essence) with the innate tendency which pushed me to search for the divine,

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[34] "Under Teilhard's lyricism in regard to the Universe, one must always discover a human reality: if man is situated in the universe, the universe is situated in man, and the history of the universe is, finally, that of man. If the world encompasses and exceeds man, it is also true to say that man encompasses and surpasses the world" (Rideau, Pensée, p. 58).

[35] OE, IX, 65-114.

> not in rupture with the physical World, but through Matter, and in some way, in union with it.[36]

Whether or not creative union is viewed as a metaphysical doctrine, its basic aim is to do away with the matter/spirit duality and to search in its place for an axis of unification in the universe. Thus "creative union is the theory which admits that, in the present evolutive phase of the Cosmos (the only one known to us), everything happens as if the One were formed by successive unifications of the Multiple, and as if it were the more perfect the more perfectly it centralizes about itself an even vaster Multiple."[37]

Teilhard founds the theory of creative union on four basic principles. (1) The primacy of consciousness: "Logically and psychologically, the first of these principles is the profound conviction that to be is good."[38] Thus it is better to be than not to be; and better to be more conscious (that is, to be more) than to be less so. (2) Faith in life; that is, life makes sense, is going somewhere, has a goal. "I believe in the fact that the World, taken as a Whole, is assured of reaching its goal, that is (in virtue of principle 1) of arriving at a certain superior state of consciousness."[39] (3) Faith in the absolute; that is, there must be an "oeuvre pour toujours"; some reality which is absolute perfection. Only if this exists can one and two make any sense at all. (4) Priority of the All. This terminal reality is unity. To these four principles we must add that of the reality of evolution taken as a postulate and that this evolution has a sense, that is, movement toward spirit.[40]

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[36] Ibid., p. 72. "Invincibly, in spite of all theoretical objections which seek to discourage it, our spirit remains convinced that, underlying the overwhelming multitude of events and beings, a certain very simple fundamental rule is concealed, whose discovery and formulation would render the Universe intelligible in the totality of its development" (OE, VII, 105).

[37] OE, IX, 73.

[38] Ibid., p. 68.

Arguing from these principles, Teilhard perceives two fundamental schools of thought in the discussion of the Matter/Spirit dichotomy. On the one hand are the materialists who see spirit as epiphenomenal in character because only clearly ascertained in man. On the other hand, there are the spiritualists who affirm two essential principles of reality, the one material, the other spiritual. The reader will have no difficulty in seeing why Teilhard immediately rejects the first of these schools. As to the second, the dualists give no satisfactory explanation of the rapport between their principles, no reason for the association of spirit and matter.[41]

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[39] _Ibid._, p. 69. [40] _ETG_, p. 176.

However, in solution to the problem, we can posit the following statement and then follow it through: Creation consists in bringing unity out of primeval multiplicity, that is, "Plus esse = plus, et a pluribus, uniri."[42] At the inferior limit of reality is total disunion, total multiplicity. Take for example the fact that in all scientific studies we can never arrive at the absolute beginnings of a process; the further analysis proceeds the closer it comes to pure disarrangement. If at the one pole of reality there is total unity, it is logical to suppose that at the opposite pole is to be found total disunion. Multiplicity is equivalent to nothingness. Hence, the world-process is the ascent out of this nothingness by means of greater and greater unifying complexity. Such is the definition of creation. And if consciousness is in function with complexity, it follows that creation is really the movement toward greater awareness, greater centeredness.

The key to the theory of creative union is a basic understanding of matter. In "The Names of Matter"[43] Teilhard outlines seven possible distinctions. Fundamentally, matter is defined as that in a being which renders it unitable to other beings, so that together they form a simpler, new Whole. Formal matter in this sense is a positive principle.[44] Concrete matter is dispersed, disunited matter--the very primitive state (beyond our reach) of the cosmos. Yet this very multiplicity seen from another angle, from the possibilities inherent in it, from its destiny for unification, can be regarded as a rudimentary kind of whole: Universal Matter. Now if we are to regard the cosmos in time, in evolution, the term matter then becomes relative to the state of union it has reached. For example and in comparison with an animal, the vegetal is relatively matter and man relatively spirit. The species of matter which thus has real importance is that which one dominates, which is less unified than oneself. This is the usual meaning of matter: Relative Matter.

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[41] Ibid., p. 177.

[42] Ibid.

For man there are three important kinds of relative matter: Matter A or living matter--unifiable, but not yet unified. This is the materia matrix--the physiological base to our spiritual activities. Matter B or inverse matter is dead matter resulting from the disaggregation of living matter. Matter C or secondary matter is the matter of the idealist philosophers and the physicists: the group of automatisms and determinisms about us.

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[43] Ibid., pp. 415-32.

[44] "Thus understood, matter (materia formaliter sumpta, naturaliter) is a positive entitative principle. Defined as 'the unitable' it is neither negative, nor evil (as would be, e.g. the disunited), and, far from disappearing it is consumated in mind" (ETG, pp. 420-21).

With these distinctions in mind, what happens in evolution? That is, what are the stages in the development of union? At the inferior limits of things there exists total disunion, multiplicity (concrete matter). It is a nothingness which obviously never exists, but is the direction out of which our world comes. In the first stages, a multitude of elementary particles dispute each other in unifying themselves. This is because concrete matter is not totally dispersed (nothingness does not really exist, except in theory), has some sort of spirit inherent within it and is animated in its own way.

> Complete exteriority or total "transcience" are, as absolute multiplicity, synonyms for nothingness. Atoms, electrons, elementary corpuscles, whatever they may be . . . must have a rudiment of immanence, that is, a spark of spirit.[45]

At this primitive stage, and all along the "material" world, only a few monads are able to unite, and many of these unions are unstable and passing. Among animals, unity is reached, but only by chance. Among men, this union arrives at a certain state of perfection.[46]

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[45] OE, IX, 75.

Some obvious corollaries follow: (1) Consistence is a function of spirit. This is the very definition of creative union. Only a synthesizing, unifying effort can hold things together. No matter how humble the type of union, it is a reflection of spirit. Thus "tout tient par en haut." Everything holds together from above.[47] (2) All reality is indefinitely decomposable to inferior terms. This reality is based on the principle of analysis which, while showing us how things are constructed, brings us only closer to nothingness.[48] (3) Materia matrix: matter is ennobled, for only in and through matter can spirit subsist. "The purity of the spiritual summit of a being is proportionate to the material amplitude of its base."[49] (4) Matter and Spirit can no longer be opposed one to another. They are relative, in a continuum from absolute multiplicity to perfect unity. (5) All philosophical systems which build on only one of the isolated elements (that is on a single monad) instead of upon the whole, are false and impossible.[50]

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[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid., p. 78.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid., p. 79.

The philosophy of creative union received a much more polished and refined expression twenty years after "My Universe" in "Centrology, an Essay on the Dialectics of Union" (13 December 1944).[51] Here Teilhard postulated a series of intuitions and explanations. In the biosphere, the singular elements are a prolongation of the granular structure of the universe. In this view, the human being is a kind of super-molecule, being supremely complex and at the same time supremely free and conscious. Thus consciousness as a universal molecular property grows in conformity to organized complexity (Law of Complexity/Consciousness), each unity being marked by a degree of interiority, a co-efficient of centro-complexity. The only true measure of being, then, is interiority/centro-complexity. Hence the universe is a system on the way of centro-complexification, a "centrogenesis." At the one end is so-called "inanimate" matter which in itself is not entirely closed, but has a kind of "psychic curvature" (the "universal matter"), open at both ends, either toward greater disunity and nothingness or toward greater unity and being. "At this degree of disjunction, there is not yet a true 'within of things, but only the 'disposition' to make it appear."[52] Whatever unity appears is the result of the play of chance following the Law of Great Numbers. The first really closed centers (that is, the first "true" appearance of consciousness) appear in the biosphere. While on the pre-living level, matter is characterized by stability, in the biosphere, centers no sooner converge upon themselves, but they attempt to unite with others in forming polycellular bodies, corpuscles of infinite complexity, and phyla. But no single center can go through all the transformations beginning with the most external zones of the biosphere and reaching even ultimate unity. Each center serves as a new point of departure. This phenomenon has several advantages: each isosphere has its own richness and density. A single given center is thus doubly centered, spatially in the number of subcenters it englobes, and temporally in its totalization of all the attempts of its ancestors.

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[50] Ibid., pp. 79-80.

[51] OE, VII, 103-34.

Now there are obviously as many degrees of centreity as there are degrees of complexity. The passage from a state of only relative centreity to that of a rigourously punctiform state is the passage from lower life to thought: the appearance of man. Mathematically speaking, man's center has a diameter of zero. But the human center is still open, can still join other centers, so that the new isosphere formed by the emergence of thought, the noosphere, itself becomes a kind of mega-center, as it attempts to unite its various human elements.

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[52] _Ibid._, p. 111.

Again the same conclusions: Matter and spirit are not two different "things," but two faces of the same movement, or the two terms of the same movement (*ad quo* and *ad quem*). An element without any trace of consciousness, "Matter" as such, does not exist. Thus one could rightly assert that there is only mind in the universe, found in different stages of organization and/or plurality. The ontological relationship between being and union can therefore be succinctly expressed as: *Plus esse est plus a pluribus uniri* (in a passive sense) and (on the human level, in an active sense) *Plus esse est plus plura unire*. And from all this follows the three Teilhardian laws of union: union creates, union differentiates, union personalizes.[53]

It has rightfully been said that Teilhard spent his life in repeating the same themes, but without repeating the same explanations. Because the treatment of man as a phenomenon, together with all the corollaries which follow (especially the principles of union) are of such major importance to a proper understanding of Teilhard's point of view, it would be well to summarize some other explanations he proposes.

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[53] *Ibid.*, pp. 121-25.

In the "Outline of a Personal Universe" (1936),[54] Teilhard began with the meaning of the person. Accepting as everyone the fact that the universe is in evolution, but recognizing that there are many who do not yet see the sense behind evolution,[55] he proposes "to construct a figure of the physical World around the human Person, chosen as the significant element of the whole system."[56] From the point of view of the person, the whole past takes shape: elements are distributed according to their centreity: the principal movement of reality is synthesis: multiplicity followed by unification. Yet we know that a general law of physics (entropy) demands continual decomposition. Nevertheless, taking the person as the starting point, we perhaps can begin to disengage the truth hidden beneath this problem.

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[54] Teilhard translated this title as "A Personalistic Universe" (cf. OE, VI, 67-114).

[55] ". . . no one whose thinking counts any longer doubts that this incessant becoming manifests one of the most objective and most general conditions of experience. But does this becoming have a sense? Is this evolution directed? Here, the most sincere spirits hesitate, and as bloodhounds who have lost the track, they turn round and round without advancing, or they may even already renounce pushing the chase any further. 'No, we are in all probability going nowhere. Or, if we are going somewhere, because of the lack of landmarks, it is impossible for us to guess where. Everything is in motion, but nothing advances': thus speak a good half of the most intelligent people I know" (OE, VI, 69).

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

If we can bring ourselves to recognize that reality is manifested in two senses, or in two phases, then we will have come a long way in admitting that "in the World, there is neither Spirit, nor Matter: the 'Stuff of the Universe' is Spirit-Matter."[57] The more elevated a being in duration, the more concentrated upon himself he becomes, the more unified, the more "spiritualized."[58] This movement is irreversible; there is no reason why con-centration ought to come to an end.

However, once arrived at the formation of the person, it would seem that the movement of spirit has indeed come to an end. For the more centered, the more self-enclosed one is, the more impermeable to the other. Centeredness seems to speak closed-ness. Now there is no doubt that this is a serious objection and that the emergence of the person is a dangerous moment for life. Nevertheless, common experience tells us that we remain open beings, that we cannot find repose in ourselves; in fact exactly the opposite is true: We sense ourselves as incomplete and unachieved, capable of true selfhood only through the other. The answer lies in the union of ourselves to others; only in this way can the open curve of evolution be prolonged. Our fear of giving ourselves over completely to others in a kind of profound harmony is based on false principles. For we know from all that we have studied on the effects of union that "the gift which we make of our being, far from menacing our 'I,' ought to have for its effect, its achievement."[59] In the ever tightening spheres of political, social, and economic actions which pull us together we feel stifled as if we were on the verge of disappearing in a sea of interrelations we cannot control. But this is the confusion of the individual with the person. It is true that as individuals the power of the other is sometimes too overwhelming. But the central axis of evolution passes through the person, that is, through the very centeredness of the individual. And in doing so, allows him, indeed, urges him to join with others to become more himself.

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[57] Ibid., p. 74.

[58] "The reality of spirit-matter is inevitably explained and confirmed in a structure of spirit" (Ibid., p. 75).

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[59] Ibid., p. 80.

The very same conclusions are reached if we approach the problem through an analysis of life itself.[60] The basic problem here lies in the fact that the more a scientist analyzes life, the more it seems to be resolved into a fortuitous play of chance. But again perhaps there is a resolution to the Matter/Life antinomy, without sacrificing one for the other, by employing the system of ascent by synthesis and a reciprocal descent by analysis. The heart of the problem is the relationship between the two major laws of Energy (Conservation and Degradation) and the law of the Organization of Energy (that is, Complexity/Consciousness), all three of which analysis shows us to be true. This rapport can be more easily explained if we attribute to every atom, three primary characteristics: a rudimentary immanence or "within," a ray or angle of self-determination; and a psychic polarization which allows it to associate itself with others to form more and more complex aggregates. In no way do these three properties inhibit the action of the play of great numbers (chance) for, in any case, all elementary particles act as if there were no immanence at all. The only measurable change occurs in more complex combinations, where one notices the angle of choice being utilized for selective association--always at the mercy of chance, but showing a definite line of ascent.[61]

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[60] Cf. OE, VII, 135-46.

It is not necessary to posit an augmentation of the quantity of energy of choice in proportion to the degree of consciousness. We can assert that energy of choice is an invariable cosmic quantum, differing in the atom and the human brain according to the organized and centered control these centers have over inferior quanta of energy.[62] We can also assert that the more organized are the cosmic centers, the more and the better they are able to control the play of chance. As one ascends in the scale of complexity, one notes that chance is utilized more and more for the inherent finality of each complex center. In this way, life always remains limited to space and time and manifests itself to us by a series of groupings. Within this movement, two principal phases can be observed in the cosmic process of vitalization: (1) The phase of syn-energy where granules arrange themselves in mechanisms to amplify the angle and ray of choice. The more complex example here is the human brain. (2) The phase of syn-psychic arrangements where centers can unite directly, consciousness to consciousness, forming an entirely new sphere (planetized humanity). This is spiritual energy at its fullest.[63]

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[61] Ibid., pp. 135-41. [62] Ibid., p. 142, n. 1.

A much more scientific explanation of man's place in nature is outlined in two works "Man's Place in Nature"[64] and "The Place of Man in the Universe, Reflections on Complexity."[65] Here, after initial warnings that his explanation is in no way a metaphysics and is not a completed, but merely a suggestive viewpoint, Teilhard launches into a summary of the infinities of the universe. Based on the corpuscular or granular nature of the world, one can construct a vertical coordinate of corpuscularity.[66] Man is found in the center of this coordinate; above him is the infinity of the universe where energy is measured according to the Einsteinian laws of relativity. Below him is the infinity of quanta. Between the two "man truly floats, as Pascal foresaw, between two abysses."[67]

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[63] _Ibid_., pp. 143-45.

[64] _OE_, Vol. VIII (_Man's Place in Nature_ [New York: Harper, 1966]. Hereafter cited as _MPN_).

[65] _OE_, III, 303-26 (_VP_, pp. 216-33).

[66] Cf. _OE_, III, 308 (_VP_, p. 219).

Now these two abysses oppose each other not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively. For example, at the human level, it is impossible to even talk about simultaneity. At the other extreme, that of the infinitesimal, immobility is scarcely known, and it is almost impossible even to attribute mass or any kind of individual durability. Thus "everything happens as if, at either end of the world, certain properties of matter became exaggerated and dominant, which at the other end of the world, were so tenuous as no longer to make a mark on our experience."[68]

The first reaction to all of this is that life and humanity appear to be lost and insignificant between the immensely Great and the infinitely Small. But a first reaction only, because we have not yet looked at a third infinity, the third abyss, that of Complexity. "Complexity is an organized, and consequently, centered heterogeneity."[69] If we add a horizontal coordinate of complexity to the vertical coordinate of corpuscularity we have a better picture of the universe of three infinities (cf. Figure 4).[70] This coordinate describes the mechanism of growth, that is, increasing complexification. At o, the conjunction of the infinitely small and the most dispersed, there is nothing; purely inert, totally brute matter does not exist. Until we arrive at the level of organic chemistry, our vector remains fairly close to the vertical coordinate because complexity is at a minimal level. But by the time we arrive at the virus, we are already in the order of the millions and man is formed of a thousand billion cells (10^{12}). The result is a curve, at first rising abruptly along the vertical axis, but then continuing almost horizontally in accord with the coordinate of complexity.

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[67] OE, III, 309 (VP, p. 219).

[68] OE, III, 311 (VP, p. 221).

[69] OE, III, 313 (VP. p. 222).

What is the result of this scientific expedition? The great proof of any scientific theory is its coherence and its fecundity.[71] A universe of three infinities (1) provides a natural connection between physics and psychology,[72] between matter and

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[70] Fig. 4, p. 257, taken from OE, III, 317 (VP, p. 226).

[71] OE, III, 318-22 (VP, pp. 227-33).

[72] "If it is then true that the rapport between complexity and psychism can be affirmed with nothing more, one could not however deny that the relation between the two phenomena ought to be examined on the strictly scientific plan in making abstraction of all philosophic reasoning. The neuro-physiologist has many things to teach us on this subject. The most elevated

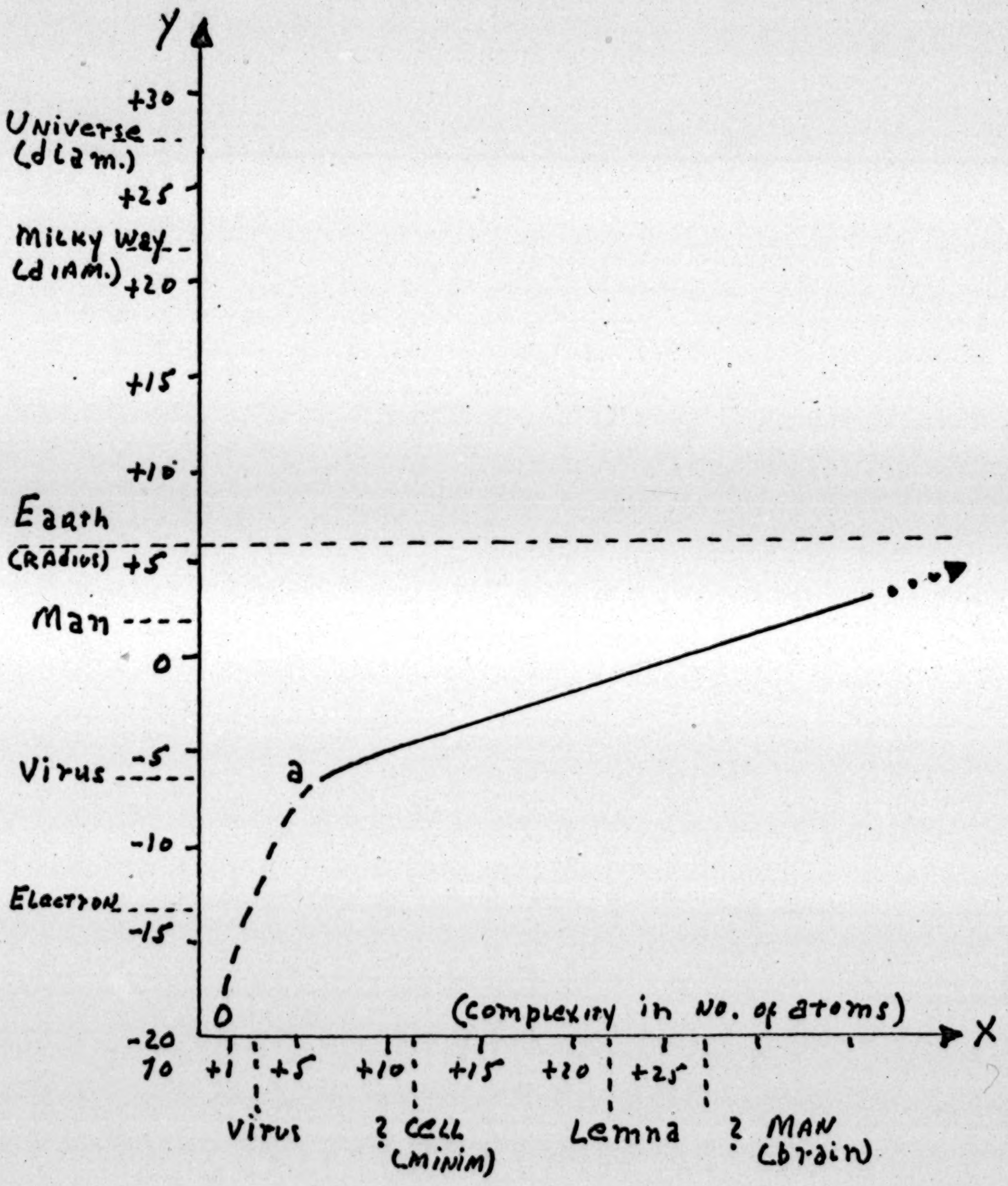

Fig. 4.--The Three Infinities

consciousness, between matter and spirit; (2) eliminates the appearance of consciousness as some bizarre trick of chance, an aberrant and fortuitous fragility in an otherwise coherent world; (3) underlines the reality of consciousness as fundamental and essential: the very axis of cosmogenesis; (4) views man as the most highly complex and most profoundly centered of all molecules, of truly axial importance, as the most advanced and furthest developed element on the curve of the three infinities.[73] As for its fecundity, we must consider man not as an individual, but as the noosphere, as humanity.[74] And with this we are ready to begin a new investigation, namely, man's relation with man, the meaning and direction of the noosphere and the future of humanity.

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expressions of the spiritual life have an organic aspect, a physiological infrastructure. Even if one does not have the right to reestablish the life of the spirit at this infrastructure, it would nevertheless be an error to deny in it the significance for our spiritual activity" (Wildiers, p. 46).

[73] OE, III, 318-22 (VP, pp. 227-33).

[74] "In the human spirit, as in an unique and irreplaceable forest, is found gathered all of sublimated life, that is, in sum, all the cosmic value of the earth" (OE, VI, 35).

CHAPTER V

THE PSYCHOZOIC AGE

"One of the most pernicious illusions developed in the course of history in the heart of man is the pseudo-evidence of his completion and his fixity."[1]

Once having established the scientific evidence for evolution and having ascertained its method in the Law of Complexity/Consciousness, Teilhard could trace the growth of the universe with sure judgment and relatively little opposition (except perhaps in his attribution of an analogous within to the pre-living levels of reality). This maturation process, as we have seen, consists primarily in the establishment of a correlation between consciousness or centeredness and complexity. On the energetic level, the axis of evolution is more easily seen to follow the expansion, or more accurately, the sur-centration of radial energy. Beginning at a point somewhere in the direction of absolute chaos, scarcely perceptible (and scientifically negligible) until organic forms appear, radial energy with its power of union/reflection takes on a more and more major role with the appearance of life and the central nervous system, reaching its culmination in the emergence of thought where it passes over a new threshold, undergoing a major metamorphosis in man. Two questions immediately raise themselves: How does energy manifest itself on this new level, the level of the noosphere? That is, what is the noosphere like and how can we describe it? And, second, is the noosphere the final stage in the growth of the universe? What of the future?

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[1] _OE_, VII, 340.

Spiritualization

From the opening quotation and from what has already been said, Teilhard's answer will be relatively obvious and easy: Evolution has not stopped and the picture of the noosphere supplies the evidence. However to properly understand this evidence we ought to insist on two major points which perhaps have not been thoroughly explained. The first of these is the spiritual nature of evolution. Although most of us recognize the centrality of mind, we have not been able to come to understand it. There are those who treat mind as something so far beyond the reach of terrestrial man, a meta-phenomenon, that it becomes almost incomprehensible and is simply accepted and unexamined. On the other hand are those (certainly more recent historically) who look upon spirit as so feeble, so absurdly inconsequential before the vast realities of the universe, that it becomes an epi-phenomenon, a trick of nature. Yet everything that science can teach us actually points to the fact that mind is neither epi- nor meta-phenomenon, but the phenomenon of the universe.[2]

Second, because we ourselves are individuals our first quite normal view of the universe is a vast panorama of individualized beings. It is difficult for us to see beyond atomized objects, because we ourselves are atomized. But a more careful glance at the world will show us that beings are really not as separated as we often think; there is an infinity of liaisons among them: psychological, economic, social, physical--all these tie beings together, and for the most part by means of that which is spiritual in them. We can then conclude that there are not "minds" in nature, but a mind, a spirit which envelops the globe and in which we all participate. This is the meaning of the noosphere, a noosphere with an immense past reaching back to the very first corpuscularizations of the universe. The spiritual is not by any means a recent accident in cosmogenesis. It is in fact the movement proper to life itself. Thus the real name for spirit is spiritualization, indicating the dynamic and genetic character of the within. Life is a metamorphosis of matter; it is matter transforming itself. Life or spirit is thus a "change of cosmic state."[3]

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[2] Cf. OE, VI, 117-18.

A profound study of the genesis of mind shows that it is not a specialized form of matter which is thus metamorphosed; rather it is matter as such, as a whole, which is changed and spiritualized. Or more accurately, matter as a profound unity is totally affected by the metamorphosis. This said, we can add that there appears no external cause to account for the transformation, simply because the transformation affects the whole imaginable extension of reality. Thus the transformation is internally spontaneous. It is the universe itself which is in course of spiritualization. And as the positive face of a twofold movement (the negative face being entropy), such spiritualization can be recognized as _the phenomenon_, _the reality_ about the universe.[4]

Spiritualization has thus three major qualities. It is first _irresistible_. It is unimaginable that a single man could stop or halt the movement of the universe itself. No shock, no violence could render it immobile. It continues: "the tranquil and ineluctable ascent of a fluid at high tension which, surmounting all the obstacles and profiting from all the weak points, filters through all the pores of matter--infallibly."[5] Second, spiritualization is irreversible for if its movement is irresistible, then, under the threat of complete absurdity, it ought to reach its proper term. At least theoretically, the spiritual phenomenon ought to be able to develop indefinitely. Functionally, each new level is only the preparatory stage for another, there being no way to see, mechanically at least, how this movement could be stopped. And psychologically the very nourishment of the spiritual development is its possibilities for the future. Finally, spiritualization is totalizing because it actually does transform matter by interiorizing it, following the single law inherent in the universe of energy. Thus spiritualization in its most refined manifestations represents a cosmic quantum of consciousness, that is, quite simply said, a personality.[6]

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[3] Cf. _ibid_., pp. 118-22.   [4] _Ibid_., p. 122.

This assertion, the personality of the spiritual phenomenon, adds a new question. If the spiritualizing process represents a cosmic quantum of mind, what is the purpose of the individual elements in nature: the atom, the molecule, the cell, the human person? In other words, now that we have established the spiritual unity of the universe, how do we account for the factual multiplicity, plurality, individuality? A first response would simply be the affirmation of a primitive disruption of unity (for example, a "fall" in nature). But if we remain true to our phenomenological method, there is a better explanation. Each sphere is integrally united with all the spheres around it. Each newly arrived center of consciousness partakes in the spirituality of those centers preceding it, is defined by the sphere to which it properly belongs, and is attracted by those centers in the sphere which follows it.[7]

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[5] Ibid., p. 123. [6] Ibid., pp. 124-25.

This theory thus gives an explanation for the distribution of beings, beginning with those elements called "inanimate" through those elements where the surcentrating process is more clearly observable, for example, in plants and animals, and finally, in man. The theory also enables us to logically posit the possibility of future spheres. The "possibility" we say because at least in theory the union of two real personalities (that is, on the human level) seems to be prohibited by the very nature of a center. In man, centration reaches an extreme level of refinement in which the diameter of the circle of consciousness coincides with the diameter of individuality. How can this center join with another, let alone forge a new third sphere, becoming, as it were, super-consciousness? The route for further progress and greater centration seems to be closed and the spiritualizing movement of the universe immobilized.

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[7] Cf. OE, VII, 352-53, for a summary of this method, but in different terminology.

But the paradox is only apparent. Centripetal union or union of differentiation, of concentration, can occur as center joins to center because of or by means of an already existent, but more powerful center. This "super-center" will be explained in much detail in Chapter VI; now we simply can affirm that it is only through centripetal union that centers can truly achieve themselves, precisely because true union differentiates. It then becomes apparent (and again a fuller explanation will have to wait until a later chapter) that final achievement of the human person is attained only in one greater than the human person.[8]

The most important summarizing statement we can draw from this brief sketch of the evolution of mind is that the universe is convergent. Far from being either a meaningless chaos floating in the midst of nothingness, or even yet an endless series of circles having neither commencement nor final goal, the universe is conic in structure. If the innermost function of evolution is spiritualization (spirit-in-genesis), which is simply another way of saying con-centration or personalization, then the end or goal of evolution is the person.

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[8] Thus, the complexity of spirit: "The sum of all the past and the ultimate opening to the future" (*OE*, VII, 130).

Human Socialization

By 1952 Teilhard was asserting with confidence that no one capable of making an intellectual judgment could deny the fact of the noosphere or human socialization.[9] This was not true in 1918, when Teilhard first made his own personal discovery of the noosphere. Then he felt alone in his knowledge, consoled only by the belief that "what I feel in this moment, all will end up feeling together."[10] Once having accepted the reality of the thinking sphere enveloping the globe, however, there are various value judgments one might make of it. There are those, and here must be included the vast majority of contemporary men, who believe that socialization is a mere super-structure, an addition to the organic edifice of the individualized man. Civilizations, human inventions, human society, the economic, social, and technical bonds among men, all of these rest in a sphere beyond and separated from the biological substrate which works its way upward to the level of men.[11] On the other hand, there are those who believe that an intimate, indeed, a direct connection exists between socialization and biological evolution. Socialization is a prolongation of this same movement of spiritualization. Teilhard summarizes this view:

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[9] "Above the old biosphere there is spread now a 'noosphere.' As to the material reality of this enormous event there is nobody who will disagree" ("On the Biological Meaning of Human Socialization," 15 May 1952, p. 1).

[10] ETG, p. 242.

> . . . human evolution . . . corresponds clearly and essentially, in addition to a stupendous power of expansion, to a vast and specific process of physico-psychical convergence which may have eluded human attention for millenaries, but whose sudden appearance and acceleration in the course of the last century is perhaps the most revolutionary event registered so far in human history.[12]

It is unquestionable from the very nature of evolution that what occurs today in the human sphere is the direct action of evolution in a human context.

> At the end of the Pliocene, individual Man was born as a mutational outgrowth of mammalian nervous systems. Since that time (may we say looking back from the vantage point we have reached today) the whole history of Mankind has been nothing else (and henceforth it will never be anything else) but an explosive outburst of ever growing cerebration.[13]

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[11] Cf. OE, VII, 402.

[12] "On the Biological Meaning of Human Socialization," p. 2.

[13] Ibid., p. 3.

Human socialization, human civilization is increasing centration.

But even in choosing this second view, further problems arise, for there are several possible directions in which one might move. Since human socialization is a prolongation of biological evolution, the noosphere perhaps follows laws identical with those of the biosphere. But this conclusion is erroneous since it fails to recognize that in hominization evolution passed a threshold, so that beginning with man the laws of evolution are hominized.[14] Furthermore, as we will see shortly, human evolution follows a rather different pattern from that of infra-human forms, making it clear that prolongation does not simply mean identification, but actual progress.[15]

A second direction may be taken toward a more pessimistic view. If human socialization is a biological prolongation of the socializing process in sub-human forms, then what we are actually witnessing is a crisis of senescence. Convergence means dehumanization, and who would dare question the reality of dehumanization today. Having scarcely emerged from millenia of differentiation, so that man has seemingly just reached the point of becoming a true individual, man is now on the very brink of losing this individuality by an excess of convergence. The totalitarian experiences, total wars, technocracy--all of these are undeniable facts of contemporary reality. Indeed, this is the most tempting solution of all, one favored by the existentialists and by those who would try to capture the attention and the energy of humanity.[16] Teilhard's response will be evident. Again he invokes the hominizing elements in the biological process on the human level, the complexifying structure of the universe, and the nature of centration. If the human individual loses his liberty in totalization, it is because he follows a path of pseudo-complexification. In real organic centreity,[17] differentiation is accentuated because union is reached not on the level of the individual, but on that of the person.[18]

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[14] Cf. OE, III, 279-81 (VP, pp. 197-99).

[15] OE, V, 204-07 (FM, pp. 157-60).

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[16] Cf. OE, V, 325-30 (FM, pp. 249-54): "It must be said that appearances (or excuses) are not lacking to warrant this pessimistic view. At close quarters and on the individual level we see the ugliness, vulgarity and servitude with which the growth of industrialism has undeniably sullied the poetry of primeval pastures. At a higher level we see the somber threat, still increasing despite the surgical operation of the Second World War which was supposed to abate it, of so-called political totalitarianism. And, on what is, in a sense, a higher level still we have the disquieting example of such animal groups as termites, ants and bees, our ancestors on the Tree of Life, which afflicted by an evil of which we seem to perceive the symptoms in ourselves, have lapsed into a state of social enslavement--the very fate towards which our implacable destiny seems to be impelling us." Cf. OE, VIII, 115-17.

[17] "Eu-centrism." Cf. OE, VII, 115-17.

Finally, a third view: granted that human socialization is the hominized version of biological socialization, nevertheless, the present stage is merely a passing event and little can be proved from it. Teilhard's answer here is definitive and emphatic: "Yesterday, perhaps, it was still possible to wonder whether Mankind as an ethnic and cultural whole could be said to constitute a finally stabilized group: today, overtaken by the rush of events, there is no longer room for any uncertainty in the matter."[19] How does Teilhard go about establishing first the reality of the noosphere and then its growth and possibilities for the future?

The biological development of infra-human creatures follows a twofold movement: phyletic and dispersive. Phyletic, that is, species or groups of species form a branch following certain directions along lines of specialization. Dispersive, that is, at certain points new verticils come into being as a result of biological mutations. The result is the fan-like structure of speciation. However, at the human level, there is a radical change due to the appearance of thought. Reflection enables single individuals to "escape" the species, to go off on their own, to identify themselves as complete individuals. At the same time, they become caught in a different kind of bond, entirely (or at least partially) freely chosen. The human phylum thus represents a picture which is exactly the inverse of that of other phyla. Instead of a period of phyletic concentration followed by the appearance of new branches and verticils producing the fan-like effect, the human phylum produces myriads of individuals and then begins to close in upon itself. Thus the three steps in the development of the human phylum are: psychic centration (in the individual unit), phyletic convergence, and finally planetary envelopment.[20]

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[18] Cf. OE, V, 327-29 (FM, pp. 248-49).

[19] OE, V, 248-49 (FM, pp. 157-60).

For the first time in the history of the universe, then, convergence dominates over divergence in the mechanism of phylogenesis. From this point of view, "the rise of civilization is nothing else but the organo-psychical aspect adopted by a colossal biological operation never before attempted in nature: the independent arrangement, not only (as in the insects, for example) of a simple family group, but of a vast group of living groups: I mean, of a whole phylum (and a phylum of planetary extension)."[21]

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[20] OE, V, 204-07 (FM, pp. 157-60).

With this understanding of what civilization represents one can dare to treat humanity as a real organism. With sufficient safeguards and with the proper correctives, one can construct an "anatomy" of society, proceeding very carefully so as not to degenerate into "puerile and sterile subtleties."[22]

Human society, like infra-human organisms, must have a heredity apparatus, that is, some way of continuing and of advancing the conquests already made in the past. The most obvious evidence shows, however, that a human child is utterly unable to fulfill the very minimum conditions for survival. This is but an optical illusion and a hominization of what in sub-human levels is a matter of chromosomes. The heredity apparatus in man is contained in his libraries, schools, languages, museums, religions, philosophies, and sciences. Here is the collective Memory of Humanity. In a word, education is the noospheric counterpart to chromosomic heredity.[23]

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[21] OE, II, 216 (AM, p. 156). Cf. also, OE, V, 163 (FM, pp. 127-28).

[22] OE, V, 208 (FM, p. 161).

[23] OE, V, 208-10 (FM, pp. 161-64); OE, V, 41-53 (FM, pp. 25-36).

On the infra-human levels the mechanization of the body had a double effect. By means of specialization (teeth, jaws, paws, wings, etc.) each species was enabled to carve out its own niche in the progressive structure of life. But such specialization also condemned the species to an impasse. As generously equipped with mass as is an elephant, his very specialization as the largest among modern pachyderms condemns him to certain limited habitats and food sources. And no matter how swift the leopard, he cannot fly. And so forth. Now it is exactly this mechanization which man has avoided and which has enabled him to "noospherize" the machine. Not specialized in any one kind of activity, man is enabled to create his own machines which give him the capacities of all the specializations of all other species. Now just as the educational heritage becomes available to all, that is, becomes a common apparatus for all of humanity, so the machine. Invented by a single person, and at first used by only a few others, each instrument eventually becomes the common property of all. So complex have these mechanical interliaisons become that no machine is now isolated, but exists and is developed in function of all the others. So that more and more, "all the machines on earth, taken together, tend to form a single, vast, organized mechanism."[24] The machine has become a very part of the noosphere.

It is not difficult to see that the same kind of discovery can be made in the cerebral apparatus. In the noosphere, there is a "brain of brains." Thanks to the machine, man is freed to develop his thought processes, and the result has been the vast and amazing system of radiophonic and televisual communications, electronic equipment, computational devices and every other type of invention which extends our sensorial and thought systems and possibilities. These simply presage the further development of telepathy and co-consciousness. So complex is this network that it is impossible for any one man to comprehend it all fully. It is the common property of all; and not merely a summation of individual attempts, but a real synthesis, providing the basis for a sphere of supervision and super-ideas. "No doubt everything proceeds from the individual and in the first instance depends on the individual; but it is on a higher level than the individual that everything achieves its fulfillment."[25]

Furthermore this entire noospheric structure is not in a state of static repose, but is in motion.

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[24] OE, V, 212 (FM, p. 166).

[25] OE, V, 216 (FM, p. 169).

> Let us try to get some idea of the speed (the rising curve, if you prefer) of this process of in-folding over the period of a single generation. Looking back to the turn of the century we see limited wars, clearly marked frontiers, large blank spaces on the map and distant, exotic lands, to visit which were still like entering another world. Today we have a planet girdled by radio in the fraction of a second and by the airplane in a few hours. We see races and cultures jostling one another, and a soaring world population amid which we are all beginning to fight for elbow-room. We see a world, stretched almost to the breaking point between two ideological poles, where it is impossible for the smallest peasant in the remotest countryside to live without being in some way affected by what is going on in New York or Moscow or China. . . .[26]

The reality of unemployment is a typical example of the movement inherent in the noosphere. The whole structure of evolution shows that development favors the freeing of the psychic, disengaged from the mechanical. And that is exactly what has happened today. Here machines do the work which formerly chained the spirit of man, leaving him free to develop his psychic powers.[27]

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[26] OE, V, 322 (FM, p. 247). Cf. also, OE, V, 136 (FM, pp. 113-14): "The phenomenon calls for no detailed description. It takes the form of the all-encompassing ascent of the masses; the constant tightening of economic bonds; the spread of financial and intellectual associations; the totalization of political regimes; the closer physical contact of individuals as well as nations; the increasing impossibility of being, or acting or thinking alone--in short, the rise, in every form, of the Other around us. We are all constantly aware of these tentacles of a social condition that is rapidly evolving to the point of becoming monstrous. You feel them as I do, and probably you also resent them. If I were to ask your views you would doubtless reply that, menaced by this unleashing of blind forces, there is nothing we can do but evade them to the best of our ability or else submit, since we are the victims of a sort of natural catastrophe against which we are powerless and in which there is no meaning to be discerned."

As coldly scientific as may have been his explanations, Teilhard de Chardin passionately sensed the reality of them and lived in the noosphere. Its first expression came in late 1917 when Teilhard spoke of the world war battle line along the Chemin des Dames:

> And so, in returning to look one last time at the sacred line--that front line, so warm and alive--a glimpse, in the flash of an unachieved intuition, of this line taking the figure ofa very noble, superior Thing, with which I felt myself becoming acquainted before my eyes, but which will need a more perfect mind than mine to dominate and to understand.[28]

The following year, this "superior Thing" received a name, "the Gread Monad," the first name of the noosphere. The Great Monad was "this superior and limitless unity of the Universe [which] we scarcely perceive . . . all the more, at certain times, a breath greater than we, coming from who knows where, passes across our soul. . . . O marvelous Center! O immense sphere! O God!"[29]

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[27] "How can a man pass quickly from normal labor to work with his head and his heart? All the questions of leisure. . . . At hours of crisis and discouragement we are tempted to think that the best thing a man can or ever will do with his free powers is to amuse himself and cultivate his garden; or perhaps principally to make war: war the great open sore (could one not say?) which drains the overflow of energy engendered by anthropogenesis . . . unmistakably, it is becoming more evident every day that the transformation of human energy is not tending towards the form of rest nor the form of war, but with all its natural weight towards a third form: the form of research" (OE, II, 222 [AM, pp. 161-63]).

[28] ETG, pp. 213-14.

The Irreversible Noosphere

The story of the noosphere does not end with the assertion and description of its existence. Two of the properties of spiritual evolution--personality and irreversibility--seem to indicate a further development.

The reasoning here can be summarized in three basic principles, all of which we have already discussed: (1) Life is not an accident: consciousness and matter are inextricably joined one to another so that mind can be defined as a property of matter carried to an extreme state of complexity, or the inverse, matter is mind (spirit, consciousness) carried to an extreme state of plurality. (2) The human psychism is situated in a superior order of privileged psychic radiations. That is, man is life at a new, revolutionary stage characterized by precision and calculated invention. Mechanical explanations for man simply do not work. (3) The fundamental reality of a single man is his centeredness, an elementary vortex of power or energy, each having a unique value. The person is a sort of individual laboratory for the production of thoughts having a universal or cosmic value. The personalization of life in men demands, pressures the union of individual vortices into a more general, greater vortex. Complete personalization is never reached, plurality never completely overcome. Man is thus not a static fact, but a development; man is a current.[30]

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[29] Ibid., p. 248.

All of these facts point to the irreversibility of the current of life by continuance through and beyond man. An argument by extrapolation might be used from the whole history of the past. Ever since life began millions of years ago there has been progress, and the amount of thought and energy in the cosmos has never diminished.[31] Any a priori theory that it should terminate at this moment with the emergence of man and the noosphere is entirely gratuitous. A more psychological argument takes account of our personal taste for action, our personal experience of the current of life. Unless this current were irreversible, we would be doomed to frustration and absurdity.[32] If there would be a serious probability that life is, in fact, reversible, that it can come to an end or that it moves in circles, we too would stop and all life along with us.[33]

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[30] Cf. "Essai d'intégration de l'homme dans l'univers," 19 November 1930; also "Trois choses que je vois," February 1948, pp. 2-5.

[31] On the contrary "all that has been said until now amounts to an option, not by chance but in the interest of clarity and coherence, for the two following positions or propositions: (a) in the material world, the essential phenomenon is Life (become internalized); (b) in the living world, the essential phenomenon is Man (become reflective). There remains a third step for us to make if we all wish to follow and move to the end, the enticing curve of cosmic evolution; and it is for us to decide, for solid reasons, to accept the third position; (c) in the human world, the essential phenomenon is the gradual totalization of Humanity (in which the individuals super-reflect on themselves)" ("Comment je vois," p. 7).

Such is clearly not the case. Nothing indicates that man is voluntarily losing his taste for life. Nevertheless, we often do live under the impression that the individual is closed upon himself and remains untouched by the interconnections which unite him with his peers. Man's brain and his elementary instincts have not changed for twenty thousand years. So that everywhere in literature as well as in science, there is a general belief in the fixity of the human individual. From general and superficial appearances, this view has a certain amount of attraction. But to really appreciate the degree of organicity in a cosmic grouping, one must look not to variations in time, nor to the type of connections between elements, but to the irreversible growth of preference, that is, "psychic temperature." With this measure, it appears that there is nothing so intensely alive or at so high a temperature as the noosphere itself. The very reality of the noosphere is the formation of a kind of "immense mirror" which one day will reflect the entire universe.[34]

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[32] An option, note, taken by contemporary existentialists and certain neo-humanists like Camus. Thus, Teilhard's unquestionable opposition to the existentialist school.

[33] "Essai d'integration de l'homme dans l'univers."

Life, following the law of Complexity/Consciousness, does not simply diversify itself indefinitely but also has the ability to change its nature; it is an explosion rather than a trajectory. Thus, it follows that there is the possibility of another threshold ahead of us, toward which we are moving with ever accelerating rapidity.[35] Hence, either the noosphere represents a kind of stationary wave in which is consummated at each instant the spiritualized energy of the world, or it is moving ahead to a greater concentration, a spiritualization of an even higher order. Doubtless, "common sense" people, the "realists" will laugh at the latter conclusion: The only difference between ourselves and our ancestors is that we are marked by even greater defects and perhaps a profounder decadence. But these forget the lessons of the history of science. "One after the other, the most reputed stabilities of the Universe are discovered as the source of currents as wide and as powerful as their supports seemed to be immovable."[36] The progress of the universe follows the general law of slow-motion: the greater the area of the universe affected, the slower the motion; so that life indeed does seem fixed. But it only seems fixed, for all evidence points to the existence of progress: cave art, the agricultural society which followed hunting and gathering cultures, the intellectual and economic revolutions of our own day--all point to the existence of further successive stages, further pulsations along the central axis now embodied in the noosphere. Today if we regard the conquest of space, the discovery of duration, the penetration of the infinite cosmos as well as the utterly microcosmic, the totalitarian experiments--only one conclusion can be reached. Our whole interest, our whole perfection, indeed, our very salvation depends upon our pushing ahead toward the new threshold ahead of us.[37]

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[34] Cf. OE, VII, 299-300.

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 303 ff.

The age of civilizations is now finished, and it is the Civilization which appears. If the thinking envelope is represented by a pulsating sphere, then man has finally reached the equator in his evolutionary voyage.[38] After the expansive convergence of the noosphere, comes the era of compressive convergence. Thus the whole of biogenesis can be summarized as four beats: Compression/Competition/Complexity/Consciousness.[39]

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[36] OE, VI, 153.

[37] Cf. ibid., pp. 153-56.

> In summary, everything is happening, as if, succeeding a long and slow accumulation of physical and psychic energies in the human atmosphere (all Prehistory and all History) a sort of spiritual tornado has just burst out which stirs us up. . . . A true "maelstrom" sucking in everything which it surrounds toward its innermost axis . . . the entire Noosphere, twisted about itself by the breath of Research form[s] but a single enormous cyclone, whose proper effect [is] to produce . . . psychic Energy in a more and more reflexive state, that is, identical with the Ultra-Human.[40]

The approach of the threshold which awaits the noosphere is heralded by the growing sense of the species in the human level. In animals each element works blindly or instinctively to assure the integrity and survival of the species. Each element is psychically polarized toward the future, that is, toward that which is more complex, as well as toward the other members of the same phylum with which it lives in a kind of sympathetic cohesion. Each element blindly obeys this double polarization: the species as a whole and the neighbor. A double transformation comes about at hominization. First, the element is absolutized because it has become conscious of itself. So great is its internal richness that it seems to have no need of the other and it is pleased to reside in its own autonomy. Secondly, because of its new power the human phylum envelopes the globe, forming the noosphere. It expands to truly planetary dimensions only to militate against the sense of the species, simply because the phylum is too great, too expansive. However, once this expansive stage has been completed, hominization enters a new stage of compression which cannot help but force an inter-penetration and totalization among the elements.[41]

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[38] "Let us imagine an impulse normally penetrating a sphere by its south pole, and spreading in the direction of the north pole inside this sphere. In the development of the wave thus engendered, there is evidently room to consider two principal phases: One of expansion (from the south pole to the equator); the other of compression (from the equator to the north pole); the two phases both developing in a curved field, that is to say converging . . . having now everywhere extended into geographical contact with itself . . . 'the equator' has been reached; henceforth, around and before us, planetary living space is contracting" (OE, II, 219-20 [AM, pp. 159-60]).

[39] Ibid.

[40] OE, VII, 374-75.

The history of the past one hundred and fifty years is enough evidence for us to conclude that if, during the stage of expansive convergence the sense of the species in man was lost, during the new stage of compressive convergence, it is being or will be found again. For it was during this relatively short period that the discovery of Time was made: "the fundamental progress and perhaps the most important step realized by human thought since we know it."[42] Not only have we become aware of the immensity of our past, but we have been awakened to the possibilities of a future. The second great influence has been that of the physical sciences. Until the eighteenth century man was frankly a primitive in regard to his knowledge and conquest of cosmic energy. Then suddenly the dam broke, every obstacle to progress in this area seems to have been swept away, and for the first time since his appearance on earth, man feels, with some justification really strong. Realizing his own special importance due to his new knowledge about the universe, man took a new interest in himself. And thus developed the growth of a kind of spiritual self-study which are the social sciences.

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[41] Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 205-08.

> For the ages to come the times in which we are now living will doubtless appear, more and more distinctly, as marking the end and the beginning of a World (the end of Neolithic times, one can justly say, and the beginning of the industrial age). . . . It is the constitution now in course of a powerful and autonomous organized human block, the acceptance

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[42] "Le sens humain," 12 February 1929, p. 5.

of humanity as a whole."[43]

The sense of the species thus reappears.

But it is a renewed sense of the species, a hominized sense. While the species-sense on the infrahuman plane is blind and groping, in man it becomes a reasoned dynamism toward the total and optimum hominization of the noosphere. It concerns itself with eugenism, but even more so with the possibilities of controlling the innermost springs of evolution, while at the same time cultivating its effective energies. The sense of the species in man is a human zoological sense, a sense of evolution, as well as sublimated sexual sense. In short, a generalized human sense, that is, "a collective faith (operative and unanimifying) in some kind of maturation of Humanity to come."[44] The human sense is a response to the call of the future. It is a recognition that humans are unified, and that we begin to see more clearly before and into ourselves. We are now adults, not simply childish passive spectators.[45]

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[43] Ibid., p. 8. [44] OE, VII, 209.

[45] Cf. "Le sens humain"; also OE, VI, 39 ff.

Planetization and the Ultra-Human

Planetization or the super-concentration of the noosphere upon itself is inevitable because of the physical roundness of the globe. If the earth were a flattened disk or a kind of infinite plate, such super-unfurling would be unthinkable. But because the earth is de facto a sphere, the shape of the human envelope is also spheroid. This simple geometric fact, joined with the Law of Complexity/Consciousness, makes it possible for us to see the inevitability of planetization and the eventual emergence of the ultra-human. Extrapolated into the future, it shows consciousness arriving at a maximum of complexity and sur-concentration.

The contemporary situation shows a definite rise of psychic temperature. The six years of the second World War, for example, can only confirm this fact. In 1939, a large portion of the Pacific was only on the margin of world civilization. Today it is irrevocably joined to the industrialized nations, and itself has lost the magic of the name of Polynesia. The war effected as well such a displacement of persons, such a mixture of races and peoples, that racial differences begin to be minimized and it becomes difficult to see persons as anything less than members all of a single race: Humanity. And is there really necessity to speak of the economic and social pressures brought to bear on each element and on the ensemble as a whole during the war (and especially after it)--all of it producing a psychic tension which increases each day? Each war, each eruption of human energy, each scientific advance, each step forward made in human knowledge is another turn of the screw: Humanity converges more and more tightly upon itself. What we are witnessing is the super-organization of matter,[46] the human quantum is finding itself totalized.[47]

We cannot of course envision the shape of totalized or super-humanity. While we have all the evidence for its arrival--indeed we know that we are already on the threshold--it would be foolish and certainly unscientific to attempt to predict the form of planetization.[48] Yet there are several comments we can offer, if we are to take the human past seriously. Since there have been no or very few physiological changes in man since the appearance of Homo sapiens, we can expect future changes to come in the realm of consciousness. On the noospheric level this means increased collective cerebralization, the limits of which escape our view. If we are aware of the present enormous growth of organization and yet the tremendous amount of disorganization which still exists, the shape of a future super-organization is unimaginable. At the same time, we must again not neglect the need for the hominization of all those laws which operated on infra-human levels. Hence, whatever organization emerges will have to be based on personality. Since the human molecule is personalized, any kind of organization he enters must enable him not only to guard his personality, but also to enhance it. Super-organization or super-humanity must be super-personalization.[49]

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[46] "In a Humanity arrived at planetary saturation a neo-socialization of compression is replacing the paleo-socialization of expansion of which the diverse changes in fortune fill, often uselessly, our history books" (OE, VII, 342).

[47] "If we are not yet today taking part in the last discordant moment, it will be tomorrow, for the denouement precipitates itself: the hour is near when the human mass, closed upon itself, will group all its members into the heart of a finally realized unit, the same legislature, the same spirit, the same orientation, tending to recapture the permanent diversity of individuals and people. Yet a little and we will have formed one block. It is the final capture" (ETG, p. 239). Cf. also OE, V, 159-69 (FM, pp. 124-34).

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[48] "In this effort of calculation, it would of course be vain and childish to introduce the unforeseeable and unimaginable modalities of the 'ultra-human' towards which we are drifting. Following the ages (decidedly past) of civilizations, what, for example, tomorrow will be the new forms of antagonism and the new periodic aspects of growth on the surface of an earth economically, culturally and politically united? Or again, under the prolonged morphogenic action of the new powers acquired by biology, what psycho-anatomical state are we to suppose the human brain will reach in a million years? . . . Exciting for the mind, no doubt, but still beyond the reach of science to seek an exact answer" (OE, II, 228 [AM, pp. 165-66]).

The ultimate levels of super-humanity are therefore actually capable of being generally delineated. Two theories as to structure seem possible. In the collectivist vision, it is possible that humans will succeed in arranging themselves in a sort of closed circuit: each element intellectually and effectively connected with all the others with a maximum of individual mastery. And this by a participation in a clear and real final vision and an extreme of effective warmth proper to the entire system. Thus, there would exist a superior state of consciousness--ultra-technical, ultra-socializing, ultra-cerebralized. In another view, the personalist vision, there would exist a universal center, ultra-conscious, autonomous of all reflection, yet supremely reflective, which would attract center-to-center all those centers inferior to it.. In this view, ultra-humanity could not be reached in a simple nebula of reflective atoms, but requires a self-subsistent and powerfully personalizing center at its very source.[50]

Granted, one is tempted to say, that the noosphere exists and that it is preparing for or has already passed over the new threshold to the ultra-human: Where does my responsibility lie? For a responsibility I certainly have, simply as an element of the noosphere. If a single human action is interdependent in extension, in profundity, and in volume on every action of the other, that is to say, if human actions are cosmic actions, then in some way I am responsible for the movement as a whole.[51] In a cosmogenesis, responsibility is hominized on the noospheric level because it partakes of the single energy which circulates through the entire organism. Since progress is reached only by the transformation of energy (that is, spiritualization) and the axis of metamorphosis now lies along human actions, the whole future of the cosmogenetic process in some way is determined and depends on my action.[52] To answer the question of where my responsibility lies, we must again return to the question of energetics and discuss its hominization as it passes from the pre-human isosphere to the human noosphere and finally, forward, to the ultra-human.

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[49] OE, IX, 201-05.

[50] OE, II, 362-63 (FM, pp. 278-79).

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[51] "Perhaps before us there was a time when individuals could still look to bettering themselves and achieving themselves, each one for himself, in isolation. Well, this epoch is definitely ended. At no other moment in history than today--let us finally decide to recognize it--is Man found to be so completely linked (actively and passively), by the very heart of his being, to the value and the perfecting of all the others around him. And this regime of interdependence, by all indications, will only continue to accentuate itself in the course of the centuries to come. A sort of generalized ultra-responsibility, affecting and reinforcing the whole gamut of virtues and vices--such will be then the most evident and characteristic morality of the ultra-human toward which, willy-nilly, by cosmic necessity, we are heading" (OE, VII, 219).

If one plots the development of energy following the given physical laws, the graph looks something like this: Ox is the axis of greater probability, Oy is the axis of Complexity/Consciousness. Beginning with the most disarranged state at a, energy passes to its maximum arrangement at b which represents its hominized state at maximum, and then descends to c, toward a state of complete disarrangement.[53]

Now a problem immediately arises when one reflects on the very nature of point b. The meaning of reflection or mind is the ability to foresee, to provide for the future. We have already seen that this is nothing more than the irreversible aspect of evolution. Once point b is reached, once energy reflects upon itself, it can never stop again. Once man becomes conscious that he holds his own future in his hands, that humanity is what he is working for, that he looks not to accomplished fact but to a work to be accomplished, then it becomes apparent that an adjustment must be made in the plotting of the rise of energy. Up until point b, energy was pushed forward. From point b and beyond it is pulled, attracted by the future ahead. The new graph thus better approximates the actual energetic curve, where bd represents reflexive energy and bc non-reflexive energy (Figure 5).[54]

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[52] Cf. OE, VII, 211-21; "L'évolution de la responsibilité dans le monde," 5 June 1950.

[53] Taken from OE, VII, 345.

Until now there have been very few who have really made it a point to study human energy taken as a whole or even to push the elementary human level to its ultimate limits. Nevertheless, it is to this task that we ought to apply ourselves if we are to fulfill our cosmic responsibility, that is, the accomplishment of the ultra-human.

The first problem is to assure at the individual level the maximum power, consistency and efficiency possible for each separate element. Here it is not only a question of dominating sicknesses and anti-evolutionary phenomena (such as sterility, weakness, accidents, and the like), but we can also look toward establishing a superior human type. Here we can develop new techniques

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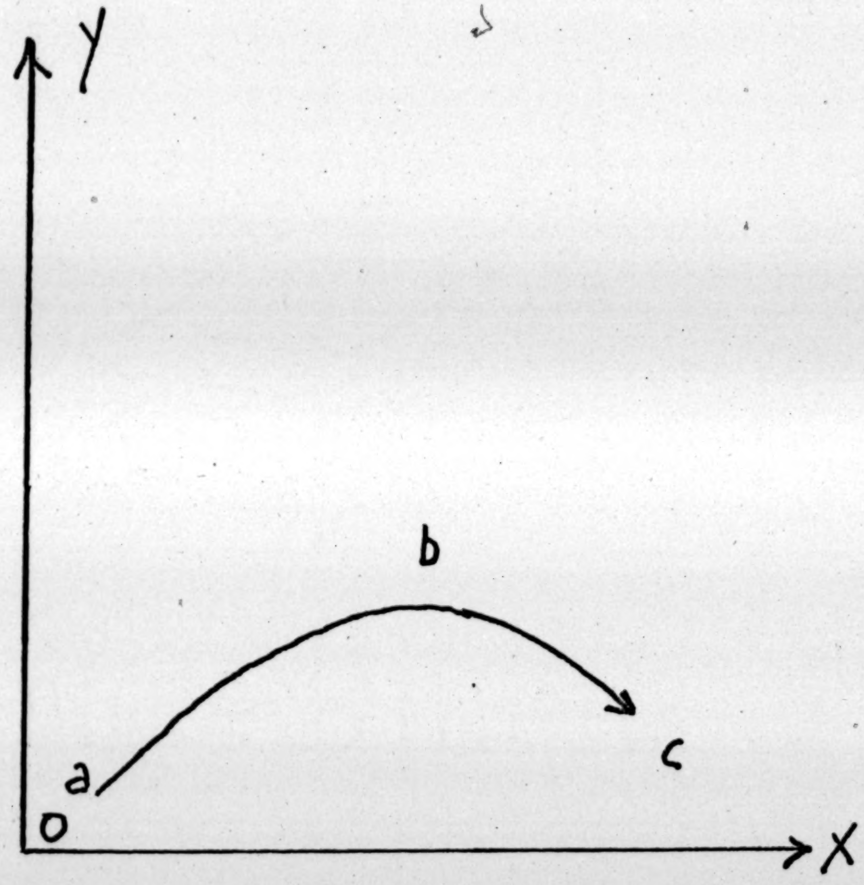
[54] Cf. OE, VII, 333-51.



OX = Axis of greatest probability
(Entropy)

OY = Axis (apparently of least probability
b = maximum of arrangement
C = maximum of disarrangement

Fig. 5.--Development of Energy

in the areas of heredity, sex control, and the development of the nervous system. On another level, that of controlled energy, we can augment the systems we already possess--radio, television, airplanes, films--extending these to as many individuals as possible. Finally, for individual man, we can begin the metamorphosis of spiritual energy, the very flower of cosmic energy. Love (in the sense of passion) has until now been left completely outside the rationale of science, in spite of its violence and ubiquity. But love, just as much as mind, is everywhere growing in the noosphere. Obviously, in its hominized form, it ought not to be left solely to the reproductive functions.

> Between man and woman, a specific and mutual power of sensibilization and of spiritual fecundation still really sleeps, asking to be disengaged as an irresistible drive toward all that is beauty and truth. It is going to be awakened.[55]

And with it new awarenesses and new faculties: faculties of immediate communication, penetration, powers having to do with the as yet hidden mysteries of the metapsyche and of the mystical order. In short, we must take care that each element of the noosphere, each individual entry of human energy culminates in its own proper maximum of personality.[56]

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[55] OE, VI, 162.

[56] Cf. ibid., pp. 159-64.

What is to be said of the organization of the total human energy? Here we are very slow, for instance, in building the "body" of humanity. The earth as a closed and limited sphere cannot support, either racially or nationally, whole areas of inactivity or little effort. Another concern ought to be material energy. After coal and oil, solar and atomic energy, what shall we use? And what of our economic resources and the problem of energetics inherent in gold, in money? How can we avoid financial crises if we continue to proceed like barbarians in this matter? And the list could continue. The amount of work is enormous and what we have already done appears as nothing. Indeed

> we voluntarily flatter ourselves for living in an age of enlightenment and science. And yet the truth is the contrary so that we still carry with ourselves rudimentary and infantile forms of intellectual conquest. Age of science, we say. But what is the proportion of terrestrial activities actually employed to visit and conquer the still unknown zones of the world: in money, in personnel, in organization? Let us try to make the computation; and we will be stupefied by the weakness of the obtained percentage. A few millionths of total energy perhaps. Scarcely the price and effectiveness of a battleship. This is a brutal fact . . . a biological scandal.[57]

There are already a few persons thinking along these lines; the homo progressivus,[58] who truly has the cosmic sense, that more or less confused, but indubitable sense which joins us to the All enveloping us. Because it is merely in the birth-process, the cosmic sense passes unnoticed, or is treated with scorn as an animal residual destined to vanish with the appearance of reason. Sometimes it is even seen as dangerous for its attraction appears to be a call to anonymous dissolution in the cosmic ocean. But far from being any of these, the cosmic sense is that nostalgia in our souls for the common stock from which the winds of individualization have blown us. But the moment will come when it will be recognized as an integral part of human psychology. We will not fear personal dissolution because we will understand the true meaning of the person; we will understand that we live in a personal universe in which union between centers can only differentiate and further personalize them. Thus, in a true sense, the cosmic sense is a love, and perhaps nothing but that.[59] Our true task hence is "not only to recognize evolution, but to make it continue in ourselves."[60]

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[57] OE, VI, 168-69. Cf. ibid., pp. 165-69.

[58] Teilhard also used "homo evolutivus."

What are the necessary conditions enabling us to take evolution in our own hands and to advance it to its ultimate state? For while the movement is irresistible and irreversible, because of the existence of our own liberty, it is possible that we will escape its plenitude. The progression of evolution in man is a free progression, since it depends on the consent and activity of a free center, the person. If man is to become truly planetized, he must want to unify himself, he must will it, desire it; he must have the vital and profound taste for self-unification. Just as it is necessary to have an oven at exactly the right temperature to prepare the best dishes, so for man to correspond to the cosmic pressure, he must maintain a certain passionate interest, a warmth of desire to move in the direction of the evolutionary central axis. It is to this taste that we ought to pay more attention, for if it itself is not fed and nourished we are running the risk of aborting the entire evolutionary process. To stir up, then, this taste for self-unification, it is first of all necessary to see the universe as open and centered en avant. The cosmos must be open for if there is no way out, or if the exit is barred, it is obviously clear that no one is going to bother working to move ahead. To really move forward toward the future, life must show itself as completely free of all barriers and obstacles, free to develop continuously, to escape any kind of total death. Now in order for this to be true, cosmogenesis must be centered in the direction of the future, that is, it must be personalizing. Anything less threatens the state of centeredness already reached by man. Men will only unite with others when they see that this union can bring about a greater centreity. In short, the universe ought to be convergent. As we have already seen, these objective conditions already exist and are recognizable if we know how to see.

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[59] Cf. OE, VI, 101-05.

[60] OE, III, 256 (VP, p. 182).

At the same time, "to appreciate a color, a perfume, it is necessary to have good eyes, and a good sense of smell." To cooperate in his own self-unification, man ought to develop in himself a certain sense of awareness of the cosmic processes. Thus, on the subjective side of the "centered world" is man's perennial sentiment to somehow become united with the enveloping All, with the Totality surrounding him. For the most part, this sense of the Totality has been toward a kind of amorphous de-personalizing Ocean. Nonetheless, it is possible to correct this (as we shall see in the following chapter) in order to discover totality as a personal home in which we are achieved and in which we all converge.[61]

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[61] Cf. OE, VII, 175-85; "Les conditions psychologiques de l'unification humaine," 6 January 1949.

Thus our evolutionary responsibility is not so much the replenishment of our stocks of material energy, our armaments build-up, or even our population control. Rather it is the nourishment, the development, and the refinement of our "taste for life," that "psychic disposition, at once intellectual and effective, in virtue of which life, the World, Action seem to us as a whole, luminous, interesting, savoury."[62] It is certainly not to be confused with mere euphoria, nor pure sentiment; rather it is the universal energy as it appears in us. Energy, in traversing its cosmic path, passes from the simple will to survival to the desire for welfare: to live better. And finally in man, it reaches a kind of culmination in a will toward super-life. All of which is to say that energy cannot continue to move, that the cosmos will have absolutely no meaning, if, in its most advanced state (humanity), it cannot define and nourish the will to live.

For until the appearance of man, the will to life was mostly a matter of automatisms; it worked mechanically. With hominization this changed; not only is the human population relatively feeble vis-a-vis other kinds of groupings, but it is also free; it can choose this way or that, and in fact can choose to reject precisely that which can lead to greater life. If, for example, as we have said, the way ahead seems blocked or shut off, there is no reason to think that man will not go "on strike" against life, that he will not lose the taste for life. And with this loss comes the end of the evolutionary process. The ultra-human can only be constructed with the human, but again, only with the human passionately devoted to the construction of the ultra-human.[63]

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[62] Cf. OE, II, 366 (AM, p. 268). "And not just any sort of taste but a strong and deeply rooted taste; a taste constantly growing with the increase in his powers of vision and action; a taste, in other words, capable of becoming paroxysmal on the approach of the final paroxysm that he is charged to prepare" (OE, II, 232 [AM, p. 169]).

There are essentially two methods for augmenting the taste for life so that a life-strike can be avoided. First, we can work on the "complexity" side of the development of complexity/consciousness. Here it is a question of increasing our organic vitality, of augmenting our states of exaltation, avoiding depressions, etc. Here there is still much work for psychologists and psychiatrists. Rather than concentrating on the disengagement of the human spirit, on its analysis, psychoanalysis can turn its attention to the engagement of man to the world. Let man know himself not to dissipate the ghosts of his past and of his invention, but "to give consistence, direction and satisfaction to certain great needs and essential appeals which stifle in us (and which we stifle) because of not being translated and understood." Psychoanalysis can thus turn from its purely medical function to the discovery and study of psychoenergetics.[64]

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[63] Cf. "Le gout de vivre," 15 August 1950, pp. 237-46.

On the other hand, we can also work to increase the fervor of life in ourselves by operating psychically on the consciousness side of complexity/consciousness. On this account, we can learn how to understand the evolutive and cosmic value of research. For a long time, men gave themselves only to those needs which appeared as immediately important. All the great discoveries until a century ago--fire, the wheel, agriculture, industry--were directed at satisfying the basic desires and little more. Up until very recently, research was a mere accessory, something bizarre or even dangerous. Today we recognize in it the very life-movement of evolution. For the significance of research is the very construction of the earth. It is indeed the highest of human functions. And so are united those aviators, those mountain-climbers, those laboratory workers and discoverers--all joined by the same passionate desire for more life and in the same feverish and dynamic activity to build the universe.[65]

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[64] OE, VII, 183-84.

It is still often said that the age of science has displaced the age of religion.[66] But it would be truer to say that the spirit of research has incorporated the energy and the mystery of religion, just as little by little it can harness the violent outbursts of strength and the force of war. In reality, far from being outmoded and by-passed, the age of religion is simply beginning. But it is an age of a new kind of religion. Just as we have had to correct the ascensional line of energy to account for growing consciousness and the fact of the irreversibility of cosmogenesis, so too we can correct our notions of faith and religion. Today religion must mean something in terms of the noosphere: it must be a religion of humanity, of the earth, with a new understanding of the divinity.

Man has thus reached a very important phase in his growth. This century will no doubt be known for the discovery of new forms of energy. But even more so it will be renowned for its discovery of humanity and the single human task to be accomplished.[67] This human sense is a real religious sense, a type of faith characterized by the double tendency of pantheism and optimism.[68] It is a "faith in the world" in testimony of which Teilhard wrote:

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[65] OE, VI, 44-47. Cf. also, "Sur le bonheur," 28 December 1943.

[66] Cf. OE, VI, 52 ff. OE, IX, 129-45; "Le christianisme dans le monde."

> The World (the value, the infallibility, and the goodness of the World), such is in the last analysis, the first, the last and the only thing in which I believe. It is by this faith that I live. And it is to this faith, I feel that at the moment of death, beyond all the doubts, I will abandon myself.[69]

If faith is a response, a taking of a position, a commitment to a reality which makes itself known to us, then we must make the decision, but quickly. It is obvious now that we are in a rapid process of totalization. By holding on to the old theories, the world becomes a dehumanizing monster, a machine bent on destroying the individual. Admitting, however, that hyper-socialization is nothing other than ultra-vitalization, the universe takes on a meaning and calls out to us to accept it. It is simply a question of our making the decision immediately. For

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[67] "I think that this event surpasses all the others in grandeur and profundity" ("Essai d'integration de l'homme dans l'univers," 19 November 1930, p. 6). "In truth, I repeat, the principal and specific event of our biological era is nothing else, initially, than the compression, compenetration and paroxysmal centering of the human mass upon itself, under the constraint of the planetary vise" (OE, VII, 218).

[68] Cf. "Essai d'integration de l'homme dans l'univers," 1930, p. 7. Cf. also OE, VI, 212 ff.

[69] "Comment je crois."

> to succeed biologically, totalization of the noosphere is not simply instinctive and passive. But it expects from us an immediate and active collaboration, a vigourous drive, with a foundation of conviction and hope. For evolution does not wait.[70]

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[70] OE, VII, 305. Cf. also OE, V, 333 (FM, p. 257): "Life will not wait for us and our state is insecure. Who can say whether tomorrow will not be too late?" OE, V, 335 (FM, p. 258): "May it happen--I have no doubt that it will, because I am profoundly convinced of the essential bond of complexity uniting Life, Truth, and Freedom--may it happen that our descendants four centuries hence, being faced by some new parting of the ways that we cannot yet foresee, will look back and say: 'In the twentieth century they saw clearly. Let us seek to follow their example.'"

CHAPTER VI

CLOSING THE CONE

Because evolution is essentially of a spiritual nature, it falls to man to continue its process. But what will inspire man to move on ahead? Until now he has been more or less pushed automatically by the mechanism of evolution. In the higher stages, there is the need for a pull, an attraction. The energy for a forward movement can be provided by a certain taste for life, the dynamic spirit of action and research. But even this is not enough. If indeed cosmogenesis is convergent in nature there must be a point of convergence which marks both the end and fulfillment, in short, the culmination of spiritual evolution. This point Teilhard calls Point Omega.

The Proofs for Omega

Four "ways" to the Point Omega can be discerned in the writings of Teilhard, four approaches which are in no way independent of each other, but which overlap and interlock in a way to make them all but indistinguishable, except for a slight nuance here, an accent there. They are not metaphysical proofs, but rather follow the same "hyperphysical" method Teilhard applies to other areas of human experience.[1]

The simplest of these approaches is that of the necessity of convergence: to make sense, evolution needs a point of convergence.[2] Confronted with the problem of action, how can the obligation to continue a progressive advance be justified? All that we wish to accomplish in the planetized phase of humanity--whence does it derive its meaning? How is our energy nourished? The obvious answer is in a common aspiration, a hope for a desired object, a common possession, a common work. In other words, the conspiration of the human collectivity presupposes the need for an aspiration.[3] We will not be able to make a single step toward the future unless we are guaranteed that our energy is not finally doomed to failure, that there is no real barrier, and no total death. What humanity desires is a "summit from which life will never redescend,"[4] that is, an irreversible ultimate, an absolute Term, whose first function is to stimulate the movement of life.[5] The argument then here is: "life, then reflection, then prevision, then the need for survival."[6]

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[1] "The problem of the relation between God and the world is above all a metaphysical problem, and even more for the christian, a theological question. For Teilhard de Chardin, the specifically metaphysico-theological aspects of the question are considered as resolved in great part. Strictly speaking, his problem is not of a metaphysical nature. His real problem is found rather on the level of life and of lived religion, or better, on the plane of action. The question which occupies him is the way of correlating and unifying the love of God and the love of the world" (Wildiers, p. 10).

[2] For example, Teilhard says: "Failing such a center of universal coherence, not metaphysical or theoretical but real, there can be no true union among totalized mankind, and therefore no true substance" (FM, p. 287).

[3] Cf. OE, VI, 173. ". . . the problem of God, especially in the later writings of his life, takes on a more and more practical or even pragmatic tonality for Teilhard: the existence of God being postulated by the

Another way of approaching Omega is through atomism or the molecularization of spirit. Moving out of the atomistic world of the utterly simple and into the regions of increasingly more complex molecules, we know already that there is a corresponding increase in interiorization and consciousness. On the human level

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success of history, more exactly by the activation of the necessary human energy for this success" (Rideau, p. 327).

[4] *OE*, VI, 53.

[5] Cf. "Comment je vois," especially pp. 12-13.

[6] *OE*, VII, 50. Also: "*Under pain of lacking its natural maximum* of convergence *and reflection (which to be attained, demands* that we search with all our force), hominized evolution from henceforth ought to include in its determinism, in addition to and above its economic *vis a tergo* (or 'push'), the 'pull' of some *powerful attraction of a psychic nature*" (*OE*, VII, 349).

we are aware that the human molecule is eminently conscious and infinitely complex. At the same time, we know that by a process of collectivization characterized by an enormous acceleration and multiplication of individual human atoms, a totalizing effect is coming into view. On this new level of planetization, the noosphere itself can be seen as a kind of super-molecule, a super grain of thought. Now, looked at from the "without" molecularization cannot continue indefinitely because of the very structure of matter. It will arrive (or at least in theory it can arrive) at a superior level beyond which further atomism will become impossible without destroying or transforming the very nature of the without. On the side of the "within," however, the process of molecularization seems illimitable. Not only does it seem possible for consciousness to always continue to rise higher and higher, but even to continue the status quo it needs a free atmosphere directed toward the future.

The only way to solve this apparent disharmony between the limited future of the without and the limitless future of the within is to posit a kind of disengagement where the within can detach itself from the original shell, which was initially so necessary for it. This is possible only if there already exists at the extreme upper limit of the evolutionary axis, a point--non-atomized, non-emergent--but a real center of universal convergence, independent of the atomistic process. In this way, a freed within, an atom of detached mind, can continue its advance, united but independent of its molecular complexity, and in direct contact with the universal point of convergence, Point Omega. Thus the process of molecularization, indeed extremely complex, may be summarized: (1) fragile unities arising from the nothingness of multiplicity behind them (no true perfect center on the infra-human level); (2) mixed molecules, that is hominized atoms; (3) pure consciousness--total union, that is, de-molecularization through union with a perfect center.[7]

The third argument, that from person and centration will be more familiar to us. For we have already seen the meaning of person and personalization: the centering about itself of a grain of consciousness so that it becomes conscious to the second degree: it knows that it knows. This occurs at the noospheric breakthrough. Nevertheless, modern man is obsessed by the myth of depersonalization. This is the result of analysis which reduces syntheses to their individual elements, leaving us only with the working parts of the mechanism. The spirit of depersonalization also results from the discovery of the sidereal, where the disproportion between our smallness and its infinity, leads us to conclude that both behind us and ahead of us there is nothing but the impersonal, a kind of floating, universal energy.

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[7] Cf. OE, VII, 47-53; also OE, II, 363 ff. (AM, pp. 265 ff.).

Nevertheless, we need but look again to the nature of consciousness to find that each consciousness possesses three essential properties: (1) it can center everything partially about itself (because of its radial energy it itself is in some way the center of cosmogenesis); (2) it can always center more about itself; (3) it can join up with other centers. Now this centration on self is nothing more than personalization. And if we logically follow the laws we see operative in personalization, it becomes evident that the system is an open system, converging at a central point of hyperpersonalization, Omega.[8]

This personality is so rich and such a master of itself that our own souls seem but frail outlines. As we know, there are centers and centers, differing according to the density of the converging rays of energy and their connections. There is every reason to believe that in such a universe (that is, a consummated universe, one which is not founded upon absurdity), consciousness, personality, centration will attain its supreme value. Thus, if we look backward from the position in which we now find ourselves, we arrive at disorganization; if we look forward, we perceive Omega, who is the perfection of centration, the most perfectly centered, and thus Personality *par excellence*. "So that the greatest event in the history of the earth now taking place, may be our understanding of the gradual discovery by those with eyes to see, not merely of Something, but of Someone at the peak created by the convergence upon itself of the evolving universe."[9]

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[8] Cf. OE, I, 286-90 (PH, pp. 257-61).

The fourth argument is that from energy. Just as cosmogenesis can be described as the development of increasingly more complex centers or as the development of persons or personalization, so can it be appropriately named spiritualization. Following the axis of radial energy, that spiritual energy through which cosmogenesis finds its progressive expression, we see that energy moved from an extremely simple function of material unification toward a human sense of union or love. Thus love as a biological reality is shared at all levels of spiritualization, but only comes into "its own" on the noospheric plane. Yet here, unless we posit the existence of a Someone who can give a form to human love, the common human longing for the love of the All will be doomed to frustration. For the All can only be loved, that is, can be attractive to persons, if it itself is a person. This is to say that true love is only possible between persons; there is no love for a collectivity, but only for a universe which personifies itself, a universe which is enlivened by the person present at its heart. Hence, for totalization to be energetically possible and cosmically meaningful there must be a point of convergence, which by attracting both amorized molecules (the human) and the super-molecule (ultra-human) by means of that energy which is specifically theirs, completes, fulfills, culminates the process of spiritualization. We shall see that such is the meaning of the human side of adoration.[10]

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[9] *OE*, V, 363 (*FM*, p. 279). "The power of *reflexion* giving man access to a higher and privileged compartment of things . . . The power of *co-reflecting himself* bringing him the power of evolutionarily setting out for an entirely new domain . . . A critical point of *ultra-* (or *supra-*) reflexion appearing at the end of *this 'rebound'* as a way toward indivisibility. . . ." (*OE*, II, 296 (*AM*, p. 209.)

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[10] Cf. OE, I, 293-98 (PH, pp. 264-67). "Quelques remarques 'Pour y Voir Clair' sur l'essence du sentiment mystique," Winter 1951. OE, IX, 137 ff. Bruno de Solages distinguishes three Teilhardian groups: (a) The

The Attributes of Point Omega

The nature and characteristics of the Omega Point are rather easily discernible from the proofs for its existence.

1) Point Omega is of an objective nature; that is, it is not simply an illusion, something that we would like to exist, a projection of our ideals and concepts. It is a "biological assemblage of our personalities," that is, not an idea but a biological necessity which we know exists simply from the fact that we ourselves exist.[11]

2) Point Omega is the consummation of all. In time, it culminates, fathers all which is the most essential, the most spiritual, most incommunicable in each reflective element of the universe and brings it in its

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Absolute, postulate of evolution (equivalent to our No. 1); (b) God to love, condition of the ultimate convergence, of a convergent noosphere (equivalent to our Nos. 3 and 4); (c) God, Prime Mover of advancing evolution (equivalent to our No. 3). Cf. Bruno de Solages, "Les preuves teilhardienes de Dieu," in L'homme devant Dieu, pp. 125-32.

[11] "A Christ who not only dominates the history of the heavens and the earth because they have been given to him, but because his gestation, his birth and his gradual consummation physically represent the only definitive reality wherein is expressed the evolution of the world: that is the only God which we could from henceforth sincerely adore" ("Christologie et evolution," Christmas 1933, p. 9).

ultimate fulfillment in its own centreity.[12]

3) Point Omega is supreme centreity. If it is true that in the pre-living stage, cosmogenesis works by the laws of centrum ex elementis centri and in phyla, by centrum a centro, in the noosphere, the law reads: centrum super centra. In union with Point Omega, the final law of centreity is expressed, super-centrum super et cum centris. Point Omega is at once the most centered and the most complex.[13]

4) Point Omega is the great totalizer, for it groups together all human particles in its own profound center. It unifies by bringing all to unanimity; it creates a totality.[14]

5) Point Omega is irreversible; it is the culmination of cosmogenesis; beyond it, there is no further complexification, no further chance of abortion.

6) Point Omega is present, supremely present, for love, that is, perfect union, requires co-existence

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[12] Evolution extends to all existence: "even to the extent where the appearance of a peak of unification to the superior term of cosmic evolution came objectively to furnish a direction and an absolute goal for human aspiration (for the first time in the course of history)" ("Le Dieu de l'evolution," 25 October 1953, p. 2).

[13] Cf. OE, VII, 120.

[14] "Comment je vois," p. 14.

not past or future existence alone.[15]

7) Point Omega is thus not only Omega, but also Alpha, that is the Prime Mover. Not only does Point Omega exist at the culmination of spiritual evolution, but it itself existed at the beginning of this process.[16]

8) Point Omega is the great energizer. In its action as energizer, it is partially active and immanent because it acts upon the radial; it attracts centers along the radial axis to itself. But it is also partially transcendent; being last of the series, it is also outside of all series; it is independent of the evolution which culminates in it. So that being engendered by evolution, it engenders evolution.[17]

9) Point Omega corresponds to the final paroxysm of the planetized noosphere. It is thus inverse-entropy, or inverse-gravitation.[18] If we let N_1 equal the number of thinking grains finally incorporated in the centro-complex Omega, and N_2 equal the number of non-reflective corpuscles necessary to obtain N_1 in conformity with the laws of chance, then N_1 plus N_2 equal Point Omega.[19]

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[15] OE, I, 299 (PH, p. 269).

[16] This is an affirmation of logic.

[17] OE, I, 301-02 (PH, pp. 270-71).

[18] OE, I, 302 (PH, p. 271).

[19] OE, VII, 129.

10) Point Omega is individual; there is only one point of culmination; there can only be one. Even if other forms of life exist elsewhere in the universe, Omega defines the fulfillment of this universe, with every possible type of life available or thinkable. "Not only does it crown, but it closes."[20]

These ten attributes can be summarized in four, as Teilhard did in the Phenomenon of Man: "Autonomy, actuality, irreversibility, and thus finally transcendence are the four attributes of Omega."[21] It is in the discovery of these attributes that one perceives at its best the Teilhardian dialectic. Beginning with the human phenomenon, we are inevitably led to accept the existence of an Omega, that is, a point of convergence at once transcendent and immanent, as well as irreversible. These facts shed a new light on the humano-cosmic phenomenon because it shows that the movement is not autonomous, but that it follows an attraction. Thus we arrive at another set of attributes, namely, Omega is not only center of consistency but also prime mover, and perhaps even more important, not simply a physical or biological mover, but a psychic attraction. The rest of this chapter will be but a continuation of this dialectic, until we have pushed our knowledge of Omega to its ultimate limit.[22]

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[20] OE, I, 301 (PH, p. 270).

[21] Ibid. Cf. also OE, II, 371 (AM, pp. 271 ff.): "Reality, totalizing power, irreversibility . . . three necessary attributes. . . ."

The Cosmic Cone: Case for a New Religion

If we were at this point to draw a diagram of the cosmos in the Teilhardian vision, we can be assured that it would take the form of a cone. In a cone there is a summit and a base. The cosmic base is a region of indefinite divergence, extreme diffusion, multiplicity. The summit is a center of convergence and ultimate meaning. If one were to follow the axis of the cone, a downward movement would bring one to dissociation where one would be able to find all the elements of the cosmos taken separately. On the other hand, if one were to follow an upward movement along the axis, one would inevitably be led to the point where these same elements meet each other and find their completion.[23]

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[22] Cf. OE, VI, 150-53.

[23] Cf. OE, IX, 56 ff. "If we concede this then the whole of human history appears as a progress between two critical points: from the lowest point of elementary consciousness to the ultimate, noospherical point of Reflection. In biological terms, humanity will have completed itself and fully achieved its internal equilibrium only when it is psychically centered upon itself (which may yet take several million years)" (OE, V, 226 [FM, p. 179]).

This new conic view of the universe has important repercussions in our world outlook. For one, the universe becomes clearer and more easily understandable: the cosmos is the bosom out of which consciousness emerges. Elements seem to fall into their respective (and meaningful) places; we discern a kind of wholeness in the universe. Second, the new conic view gives us the basis for a mode of action--it points to something beyond our immediate existence, shows us a goal for which to work, eliminates the absurdity which could not be escaped in other world views. "All things are seen to be supremely physical, supremely natural, supremely organic and supremely vital--according to how far they contribute to the construction and closing of the time-space cone above us."[24] The world, too, begins to glow with a new warmth as we realize the meaning of energy, especially human energetics and the power of love for union. Finally the entire universe is, as it were, illumined from within, from the within; it offers us the possibility of fulfilling our highest aspiration.[25] This is the peace that the world can give:

> Until now, the insignificance of my life and the disdain of men disconcerted me. To be unknown or

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[24] OE, V, 120-21 (FM, p. 91).

[25] Cf. OE, V, 118-22 (FM, pp. 89-93).

> badly known even lately still seemed to me an intolerable deception the fear of which paralyzed my action. Now that the true measure of things is manifested to me, I am liberated. . . . The sole recompense which I desire for my pain from now on is to think that it is utilized for the essential and durable progress of the Universe. . . . a very humble atom, I will accomplish in it the imperceptible function of a heart as wide as the Universe. . . . And this is the peace the World gives. The responsibility and the joy of a great palpable interest has transfigured my life.[26]

And this is, at the same time, the result of that faith in the world which we have seen earlier as characterizing not only Teilhard himself, but those who believe they know how to see. We are, then, ready to understand the first part of Teilhard's declaration of faith: "Comment je crois," written as early as 1934, a declaration the first three terms of which are: "I believe that the universe is an evolution, I believe that evolution moves toward spirit. I believe that spirit is achieved in the personal."[27] Teilhard explains his faith as an active sort of commitment: "To believe is to effect an intellectual synthesis. To believe is to develop an act of synthesis of which the first origin is intangible."[28]

Teilhard analyzes his natural faith into four major elements. First is his faith in the world, buttressed by the discovery of the All or the totality in the universe, and the interconnectedness of all, so that there are no longer things, but only "elements." This view divides the world into two types of men, the radical pluralists and the monists. In fact, the radical pluralist has no position at all: he merely asserts that there are no answers to the questions posed by the existence of the universe. Those who cultivate their special cosmic sense can, however, understand the monism which the universe actually forces upon us.

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[26] ETG, pp. 32-33.

[27] "Comment je crois," p. 1.

[28] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

The second element in Teilhard's faith is faith in Mind: caught up in time and in the dynamism of the world, we have but to apply our synthetic powers to see the proper place of man. Beyond the illusions of fragility and the reproaches made against anthropocentrism, if we take man as the central phenomenon in the world, the whole perspective changes. From the discovery of the centrality of the human phenomenon comes the belief that the unity of the world as presented to our experience is the rise of the whole toward an ever more spiritual state, that spirit and matter are but two faces of the same reality, and that the single most important rule for man is that it is better to be more conscious than less.

But if all is possible, if man must dare all, try all--to the very limit--why then not all eventually realized? A denial is gratuitous, and we have everything to gain by acceptance.[29] "Man, the more he is man, can only give himself to what he loves. And in the end he loves only the indestructible."[30] Without immortality, irreversibility, the very sources of our energy would dry up. Man is thus biologically placed between suicide and adoration. If man in reality moves toward the immortal, the immortal exists. The world ought to furnish us with a limitless horizon open toward the future.

Yet not only is life irreversible; it culminates in a personal where, once joined with it, we will find ourselves super-personalized. The converging cosmos cannot converge on some Thing, but only on Someone. And here it is not a question of individual survival. "Very sincerely," asserts Teilhard, "my personal bliss does not interest me; it is enough, for my happiness, that the best of myself passes forever into the more beautiful and the greater than me."[31] This "best part" is personality, the center of perception and love. Faith in personality demands not that I give myself up, despoil myself of that which makes me myself, but rather that I reinforce the personal qualities within me. Only in this way can I be joined with the supreme person, the Someone ahead; only through him can I reach my fulfillment; for union differentiates, which is not a paradox but a simple law of experience. Thus the initial intuition of universal unity now reveals itself as a presence, and "a Presence is never mute."[32]

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[29] "Ardentes fortuna juvat" ("Fortune favors the daring") (ETG, p. 316).

[30] "Comment je crois," p. 10.

[31] Ibid., p. 12.

The existence of this kind of faith refutes the contention that religion is dead.[33] But the new religion is imprecise and impersonal,[34] based on the group reaction to the universal[35] insofar as the universe makes an appeal to that which is innermost in us.[36] It is pantheistic, immanent, organicist, and evolutive, yet does not oppose traditional religion as unbeliever versus believer. Rather the battle is between two kinds of believers: "A Religion of the Earth is being formed against the Religion of Heaven."[37]

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[32] Ibid., p. 14.

[33] In fact, Teilhard was well aware of the problem of the sincere non-believer and the authors who describe the "death of religion." He himself does not hesitate to speak of the death of religion and "believers" outside of the religious groups. Teilhard's terms depend upon the group being addressed. In notes to ecclesiastical superiors and other christians, he uses terms which they can understand. And the same is true, of course, for other groups. One thing is clear: Teilhard was convinced of the profound religious quality of the age.

[34] "Christianisme et evolution," 11 November 1945, p. 9.

[35] "Just as for a Saint Augustine and a Cardinal Newman, the soul of their whole spiritual life is expressed in this group of words: Deus et anima, I and

The new religion which has gradually been coming into existence since the Renaissance where it confusedly had its beginnings in the birth of the scientific spirit has taken a clearer form in the last one hundred years. It recognizes the predominance of the whole over the individual. At the same time it also recognizes the human person and has a passionate faith in the value and possibilities of human effort. And its morality is a morality of research of whose sacred character its followers have a very live perception.[38]

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my creator, so the interior regard of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin is completely directed toward the problem of the relations between God and the world" (Wildiers, p. 8).

[36] "Comment je crois," p. 15.

[37] OE, IX, 159. Cf. also OE, VII, 248 ff. The world suffers from an unsatisfied desire: "No longer only a religion of individuals and of heaven, but a religion of Humanity and of the Earth: that is what we are waiting for now, indispensable oxygen."

[38] Cf. OE, IX, 147-53.

Until the Renaissance, there seemed to be but a single attitude toward religion and toward God. Only one final outcome for the world seemed possible: toward the "above" by evading matter (either completely or partially). Since the Renaissance this attitude has been drastically transformed[39] so that the outcome of the world now appears not "above," but "ahead," through and by means of matter.[40] At the same time, the new perspective of the world in time shows that the world is no longer closed and stultified by circular or divergent diversifications. Rather there is an axis of cosmogenesis: the world advances. This requires a religion and a morality of dynamism; not a religion of regularity, but a religion of conquest.[41]

The duality of the "above" and the "ahead" had always existed, but remained long distinct. For until several hundred years ago, humanity was passing through a religious phase and the traditional christian religion monopolized thought, science, and the arts. Then through the impact of a tremendous breakthrough in scientific thought, this convergence was broken and a reaction set in wherein each side attempted to develop independently of the other. And so the church anathematized progress and even some proven scientific theories; and the followers of science turned to naturalism and laicism. At first the followers of the earth wished to forget or deny the essential need of the infinite. But after its first days of enthusiasm were past, the new faith tended to create its own divinity: omnipotent science, humanity, or the superman. But no one was ever able to specify these idols nor were they fecund as sources of morality and action. On the other hand, traditional religion too felt the same impotence for as soon as it repudiated nature in counteraction against the followers of the earth, it became a stranger to man; it lost man's confidence.

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[39] That is, metamorphosed, not obliterated.

[40] "Trois choses que je vois: Contingence de l'univers et bout humain de survivre," February 1948, p. 8.

[41] OE, IX, 136.

> What puerile maledictions fallen from ecclesiastical lips against newness! How many paths at first forbidden and then revealed to be fruitful! What vain subterfuges to make believe that one was guiding a movement by which one was being led by force![42]

This schism between two kinds of believers can be healed. The soul of the world which appears through science is an absolute giving stability and unity; its extra- or supra-individuality helps us to free ourselves from egoism; its intimacy, its palpable mystery dissolves and penetrates us; its grandeur envelops and absorbs us.[43] The time is now to rejoin these two fragments of truth and reality, to rediscover their complementareity, "to weld the base to the summit of the pyramid." Religion and science need not be separated nor confused for they are two views of the very same reality. And "because the duality is manifested to our age, it is for us to synthesize it!"[44]

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[42] ETG, p. 79.

What are the biological requirements for this synthesis? That is, what does biology and science show as necessary for a religion to be really an organic function of modern man? The biological function of religion is "to give a form to the free psychic energy of the world."[45] And the only direction which this energy can take is towards a unified universe. If this is the true nature of religion, then for man to move to his natural term (which as we now know is precisely the unified universe) the religious temperature must increasingly mount. It follows that only that form of faith will survive which shows itself capable of exciting or activating to the maximum the human powers of self-evolution.[46]

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[43] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 225. [44] *Ibid.*, p. 80.

[45] *OE*, IX, 137.

Which of the faiths prevalent today can we choose? Which current religion can best fulfill man's biological needs? In a time long past, one chose one's religion by the miracles which it claimed in its favor. But now the criterion, at least for those who are convinced of their faith in the unity of the world and in the existence and immortality of the spirit born of the synthesis of the world, is how well a religion can bring these beliefs to their fullest flowering. Teilhard sets up two patterns of choice, one extremely simple, the other much more elaborate; but both of which it would be well to follow through.[47]

In "Comment je crois," Teilhard delineated three possible types of belief.[48] First is the belief of the oriental religions which are eminently universal and cosmic, with an intense and truly active understanding of the whole. The highest and most profound expressions are in India, the birthplace of pantheism. Here spirit is seen as a homogeneous unity; matter is composed and heterogeneous, an illusion (maya). The conclusion for Teilhard is quite obvious. Since "matter is charged with sublime possibilities,"[49] liberation is not to be achieved by throwing it off: spirit is truly liberating insofar as it enables me to know and to do more. And it can only obtain this for me through matter. Thus the oriental religions tend toward a passive renunciation of the world.

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[46] Cf. "Trois choses que je vois," p. 5.

[47] There is no intention here of fully elaborating Teilhard's conclusions concerning either classical pantheism or the oriental mystiques, nor even the contemporary pantheism. For continuity's sake, I have chosen here to pass quickly over these aspects and to dwell upon the christian religion as following the central theme of Teilhard's thought.

[48] "Comment je crois," p. 16.

A second type of belief are the humanitarian pantheisms, all of quite recent birth. Most of these are non-codified (except for marxism), vague and without any apparent god or revelation. But they all have a similar basis and that is universal progress to which man ought to devote his whole being without reserve. The world has been converted to this religion of evolution in a very short time. Its adherents are characterized by a sense of great energy, the need and desire for research and for greater consciousness. This leads to the sense of working together and of cooperation. But there is a kind of deception here. Most followers of humanitarian pantheisms include spirit in their doctrines, but stop short of the immortality and personality of the mind. Thus, while the oriental religionists seem to throw themselves into an abyss to escape the sun, the pantheists seem to stifle under a low-hanging sky.

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[49] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

Christianity, as the third major current, seems to offer as little possibility as the other two for convergence with the kind of faith in the world necessitated by the facts of spiritual evolution. It does not believe in human progress; its doctrines of creation and redemption, of the fall and original sin, all place insuperable difficulties in the path of acceptance. Yet on the other hand, christianity is par excellence the religion of the imperishable and the personal. Its God is a Someone; its universe culminates in immortal souls who are themselves responsible for their destiny. With some corrections, this religious stream might be reconciled with spiritual evolution.[50]

In 1950, Teilhard wrote an article which came to similar conclusions though by a somewhat different path.[51] If we examine individual human centers, we can see that each human ego is irreplaceably coextensive with the entire universe, so that the universe itself is a kind of sphere filled with a dust of infinitesimal and incommunicable centers, each center occupying a rigorously determined position by the play of evolution. In the interior of each center there is a kind of elementary dream, that of the disappearance of multiplicity and of ultimate fulfillment and union with the plenitude of being. This is the "great secret" of sanctity, the search for mysticism: the secret of communicability with the All which englobes us and each other personal center around us.

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[50] Ibid., pp. 16-19.

[51] "Pour y voir clair, reflexion sur deux sources universels d'esprit," 25 July 1950 in OE, VII, 223-36.

Now there have been several approaches to the solution of this search for oneness. In a kind of youthful endeavor to open oneself to the all, the mystic seeks to embrace everyone and all immediately; in fact, to become all. But as this view is soon seen to be impotent because it cannot really move beyond multiplicity, a more subtle direction is taken. To become spiritual, that is, to become one with all, why not attempt to efface everything which creates a difference between myself and others? By the abolition of differentiation, unity with everyone may be achieved. Whatever is individual in me must be stripped away.

On the other hand, there has been another way to efface multiplicity, a theory which is in reality diametrically opposed to the annihilation of individuality. Instead of moving toward the periphery of reality (the least common denominator) we can turn toward the center. Each individual goes forward as far as his limits allow in the hope that at the end he will rejoin all the others to harmonize with them. Thus instead of suppressing plurality, he centrates it, following the principle that true union differentiates and personalizes.

Unity then can be reached at the base by dissolution or at the summit by ultra-differentiation. These two approaches have a common ground insofar as the stuff of the world is really unified and consciousness can arrive at the sought after ineffable. But the difference is greater. For in the first case, the individual ego disappears, while in the second it is reinforced. Thus three types of pantheism appear: "para-pantheism" (that is, the attempt to become everyone) is recognized as impossible; "pseudo-pantheism" (or eastern monism, that is the attempt to become the all) finishes by the loss of personhood and individuality; "eu-pantheism" (or western monism, that is, the attempt to become one with everyone) can achieve its purpose by means of supercentration. The facts of an evolving and convergent universe make the option of the last inevitable. Thus again the three basic types of religion may be reclassified: oriental or hinduist--the ideal of diffusion and identification as biological evolution is an illusion; marxist--search for super-centration, but in not finding it possible, a settlement for a material infra-structure of things; finally, the christian--its principal effort always toward God all in all in an atmosphere of love. Yet even christianity in its mystics and dogmatics is notably deficient because of an attempt at fusionism as well as an Aristotelian conception of the cosmos. All three religions are thus imperfect in their present state and there is nothing available in this realm to guide those searching to expand their centric cosmic sense. "The hour has certainly come when one can and ought finally to disengage, at the antipodes of an outdated orientalism, a new mystique, at once fully human and christian: the route of the West, the route of the world of tomorrow."[52]

In his discussions Teilhard makes it abundantly clear that in spite of the realities and attractiveness of either the oriental religions or the newer humanitarian faiths[53] and despite the lacunas and weaknesses of contemporary christianity, it is to the latter that one can look for the kernel of the new religion.

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[52] Ibid., p. 236. Cf. also "La route de l'ouest; vers une mystique nouvelle," 8 September 1932.

Lacunas and weaknesses, we said. And such there are in christianity. Christianity appears too easy, offers no challenge, and provides a god who seems to be more feeble, less fulfilling of the universe than the center required by the cosmogenetic view.[54] Christianity seems separated from the universe, floating somewhere beyond or above it, interested only in "saving" the weaker parts of a humanity in whose dreams for the most part it seems disinterested. Today's christianity is too "extrinsic," too "particularist," too "juridical."

The result is suspicion of the christian, or, even worse, the belief (sincere and often well-founded) that the christian does not really share the basic ideals and strivings of modern man. In fact, christianity has never before had to face such a problem, for today its very moral value is being placed in question, and far from being accused of being too rigorous and exacting, it is regarded as missing the entire meaning behing human ascesis and effort. In fact, since the first appearance of a faith in progress and in human unity, the clergy has consistently attempted to stifle, condemn and ridicule it. "Let us be frank," says Teilhard in a burst of realism and sincerity rare in many churchmen, "at bottom, the church has never understood as we do now the beauty of human pride, nor the sacred passion for research, these two fundamental elements of modern thought." The church has gone into and in some ages has even dominated aesthetic and charitable activities, but it loses all its power of attack and penetration of the real when it fails to understand the basic thrust of modern human endeavor. The aphorism, "Nothing to look for, everything has been found," is indeed the very opposite of what contemporary man believes and holds most dear. In short, the church has created a growing fissure between itself and the earth.[55]

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[53] Teilhard was obviously personally attracted toward the new humanitarianisms because of their wholehearted acceptance of evolution and science as well as faith in progress.

[54] "Le sens humain," 12 February 1929. ETG., pp. 335 ff.

In the long history of monotheism, christianity has succeeded in following the progressive axis along which there have occurred two major transformations of the idea of God: universalization and amorization. From a god among gods, to a universal God, and then to a loving and lovable Father--such is the stage at which christianity rests today. But in the face of our new knowledge about the world and the universe, we are forced to admit that such a stage is neolithic in expression. God as the loving father is a concept built on the family and the cultivation of the fields. God the father is not enough; what we need is the God of Cosmogenesis. What we need is a christianity which can adapt itself, grow, expand, enlarge itself to the dimensions required by the new vision of the world, so that in attracting men to itself, it can direct their energies toward a God who can fulfill the highest hopes and aspirations of the followers of evolution.[56]

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[55] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

But this view of christianity is superficial. There is a gap between preachers and theologians, and between the fixed dogmatic expressions of the churches and the teachings of the mystics, of Saint John and Saint Paul. The essence of christianity is "a personalistic universe." As such it believes in a laborious and personalizing unification of souls in God, but remaining always distinct from him. This unification of the human and the divine is accomplished by incorporation in Christ, which in its turn is effected through the construction of a collective humano-christian unity or church. Thus to be a good christian a triple faith is necessary, beside which all other considerations become secondary: faith in personality, faith in the divinity of the historical Christ as an object of love and adoration; and faith in the reality of the church, as a real phylum of unity.

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[56] Cf. "Le phénomène chrétien," 10 May 1950.

Flowing immediately from this triple belief is the christian's insistence upon the primacy of charity. Charity or love is the dominant energy in the system of personalization: a real person-to-person attraction, the only truly effective centrating energy. Grace then is not simply juridical justification, but a physical sur-creation with a real power of transformation. Belief in the church carries with it the belief that through the church, the christian group continues toward a superior degree through its potentialities to arrive at maturity and achievement (infallibility of the church).

Again, it is not miracles, but the capacity to explain the universe which is the criterion for the "true" religion. Today, the "true" religion must justify and assimilate cosmic progress. In this regard, the most orthodox of christians can see three things:

(1) At their base, evolutionism and christianity coincide. Evolutionism on its part is no longer materialistic and deterministic, because it includes the human

phenomenon within its purview. And christianity has recognized that its three most fundamental mysteries (creation, incarnation, redemption) are three forces of the same process of christogenesis.[57] (2) Evolutionism and christianity have need of one another to sustain and mutually achieve each other. If the universe did not possess a material center of convergence, the cosmic meaning of Christ would be unintelligible, and, on the other hand, without the cosmic Christ the natural center of convergence would be merely an uncertain hypothesis. Christ renders evolution possible; evolution renders Christ concrete and desirable. (3) Evolutionism and christianity have only to join and fecundate one another.[58]

In another way, the essence of christianity is seen to coincide almost perfectly with the beliefs of evolutionism, for christianity asserts the existence of a hyper-personal God (that is, a supreme "I") who draws all lesser egos to himself through Christ (the christic "I") without confounding them. Practically, this has expressed itself in a privileged mystic value, evolutive in nature. As a rational static scheme, it becomes a metaphysical theology. But to keep the essence of christianity in dynamic form, we can schematize it thus: where SS = the surface of hominization, that is, the region where the multiple attains reflective consciousness (Figure 6).[59] From this point, there are true egos. Now so that the supreme center of unity (God) be not merely reflected in each conscious element, but so that it could obtain final unification of each element with itself, it materializes itself under the form of a conscious element. This is the christic "I," the historic Christ, Jesus.[60]

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[57] Cf. below, chap. vii.

[58] Cf. "Introduction à la vie chrétienne."

A "corrected christianity," then, seems to be able to satisfy the biological requirements of a new religion. While it is reproached for being too anthropomorphic in its descriptions of God and too enthropocentric in its concern for man, both God and man taken in an evolutionist sense safeguards a renewed christianity against these accusations. For God as a center of centers, and man, not as center of the world, but as an axis, indicating the world's direction--these concepts bring out an essential harmony which already exists beneath all appearances of untoward simplicity.[61]

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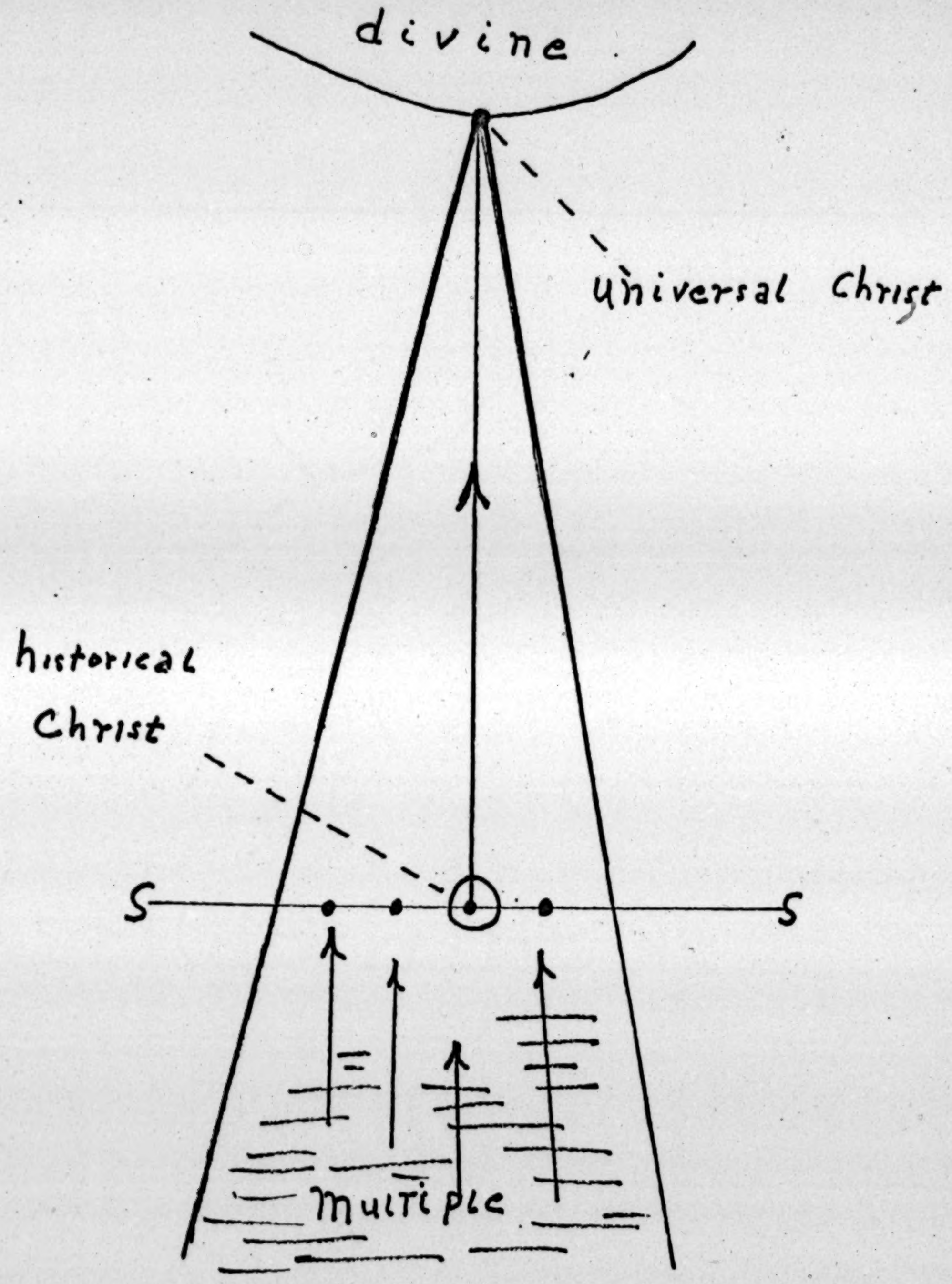
[59] Cf. Fig. 6, taken from "Quelques vues générales sur l'éssence du christianisme," May 1939.

[60] Cf. *ibid.*

[61] Cf. *ibid.*


divine
Universal Christ
historical Christ
S
S
Multiple

SS = surface of hominization where the "grains" of created personality appear

Fig. 6.--Dynamic Christianity

A diagram may again, perhaps, aid us to better understand the concept of corrected or rectified christianity. If we let OY equal the "ascensional" christian faith, that is, the faith in a transcendent God above, and OX equal human faith, the propulsion toward an ultra-human, in the future, then OZ is the rectified religion which comes about from the recognition of mutual elements inherent in both axes--the tangibility and progressivism of OX and the irreversibility and warmth of OY. (It is important to note that OZ is not a compromise. It is a result of a combination and thus truly a "new" thing.)[62]

Convergence of Two Faiths

It ought not be difficult to recognize that God and Omega are one. But the unification of the christian God and the evolutive Omega is far from a simple one. On one hand, if Omega is "the superior cosmic term disclosed by creative union,"[63] this is not simply to say that Omega is the same as christian God. Rather God "coincides" with the center of the convergence of cosmogenesis; he is not the center himself.[64] Yet this

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[62] Fig. 7 taken from "Trois choses que je vois"; OE, V, 349 (FM, p. 269); OE, I, 324 (PH, pp. 291-98).

[63] OE, IX, 82.

[64] Cf. "Le Dieu de l'évolution," 25 October 1953.

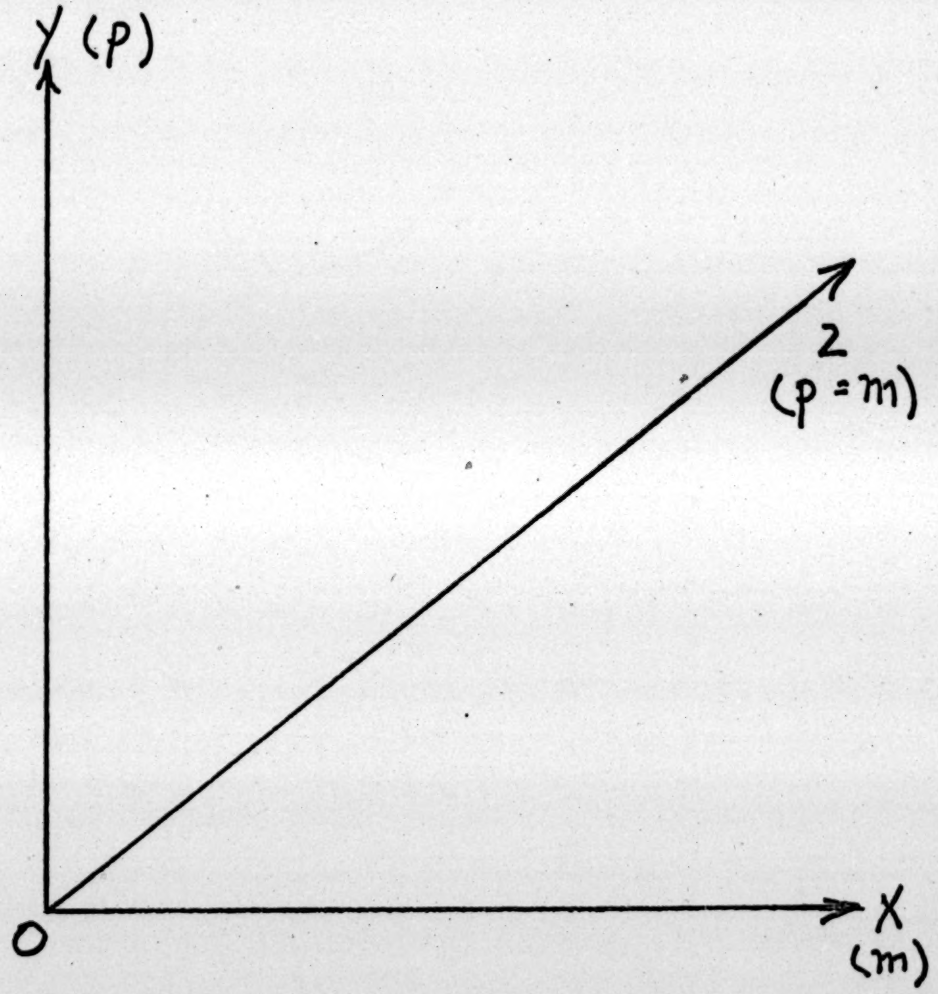

Fig. 7.--Composition of the Two Faiths

explanation reveals a double point of convergence, or two points: God and Omega. And this Teilhard rejects: The "new God" must be a God unlimited to simple redemption of our planet, and secondly he must not be offered as a rival summit.[65] The problem can be resolved by means of a "cosmic Christ." This is not the Christ of classical theology, whom Teilhard sees as too limited and too eccentric to act as center of the universe. What is needed is a larger, a greater Christ, the Christ Teilhard designates as the Universal Christ.[66] It is this Universal Christ which Teilhard means when he states that Christ is nothing else than Omega.[67] He is the Christ, not of the juridical school who is only a king and a proprietor, but of the physical school. While the legalists think that even mystically understood, Christ can be taken only in an analogous friendship-familial association, the physical school sees a hyper-personal relationship. As usual, "between the two attitudes, one must opt not by reasonings but because one sees. . . . I am a physicist by instinct."[68]

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[65] Cf. *ibid.*; also *OE*, IX, 209-10.

[66] For Teilhard this is the Christ of John and Paul found in Rom. 7:18 ff.; Rom. 14:7,9; I Cor. 4:22; I Cor. 6:15 ff.; I Cor. 10:16; I Cor. 12:12 ff.; I Cor. 15:23-29, 39 ff.; II Cor. 3:18; II Cor. 4:11; LL Cor. 5:4,19; Gal. 3:27,28; Eph. 1:10, 19-23; Eph. 2:5, 10, 13, 14; Eph. 3:6,18; Eph. 4:9, 12, 13, 16; Phil. 2:10; Phil. 3:10, 11, 20-21; Col. 1:15-20, 28; Col. 2:9, 10, 12, 19; Col. 3:10; I Thess. 4:17; Hebr. 2:7-8. Cf. *OE*, IX, 82.

[67] "Christ, *hic et nunc*, occupies for us in position and in function, the place of the Omega Point" (*OE*, IX, 82, 210 ff.).

Who is this Christ-Omega, this Universal Christ? "By the Universal Christ, I understand Christ the organic center of the entire Universe." That is, the Universal Christ is not only the center of earth and of humanity, but of all effort, not simply moral and religious, but physical and psychic.[69] To all the powers which we can attribute to the Christ must be added a "physical and supreme influence over all cosmic reality without exception." To him we do not hesitate to attribute the powerful energy of a superior and unique monad, who actually confers intelligibility on all things, as well as their definitive power of action and reaction. Once matter is thus "inoculated" by Christ, all of it is physically impregnated by him and his cosmic nature. This is "christification," and because of the essential unity of the universe, there is a pan-christism, that is, the unity of all that is valuable, all that is good in the universe, in the incarnate word, which he assimilates, transforms, and divinizes. In this way, cosmogenesis becomes christogenesis: the evolution of the total, the universal Christ. It was he, in fact, who first moved the cosmic masses toward thought. The long preparations before his immersion into matter, that is, before the inoculation of the One into the Many, were cosmically, biologically necessary. Then through his life and death he further showed the way of union, in accepting and participating in multiplicity or evil. Finally, by his resurrection, which marked a tremendous cosmic event, he takes possession of his rightful title, in the final conquest of multiplicity and nothingness, as the Universal Center. Through the eucharist, he continues his presence in the world.[70]

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[68] *Ibid*., p. 84. [69] *Ibid*., p. 39.

A swift glance again at the cone of time (Fig. 8), this time in a more complete version, will show us how far we have come. On the outside layers of the cone are the humano-cosmic centers, each of them centrating and sur-centrating upon themselves. At the center is the christic cone or, more correctly, the humano-christic cone which is the church: the "seed of super-vitalization deposited in the heart of the noosphere by the historic appearance of Christ-Jesus."[71] The church acts as an interior cone, a kind of phylum within the very core

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[70] Cf. ibid., pp. 82-93; also n. 4.

[71] OE, VII, 156.

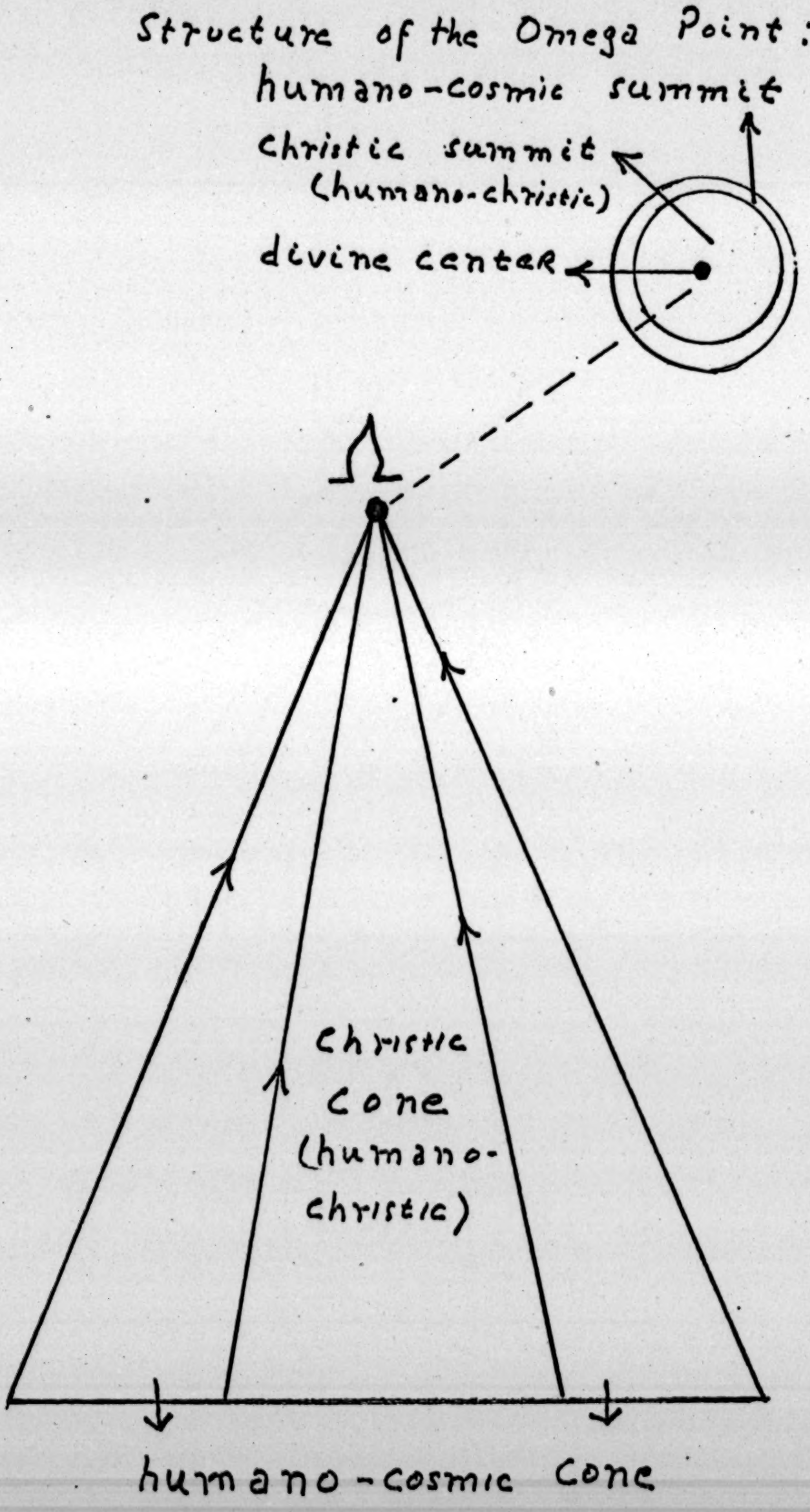
Structure of the Omega Point:
humano-cosmic summit
christic summit
(humano-christic)
divine center
Ω
Christic
cone
(humano-
christic)
humano-cosmic cone

Fig. 8.--Cone of Time

of the humano-cosmic phylum. In the figure on page 345 we can recognize the wonderful simplicity and yet the complexity of the final emergent picture of Point Omega. It marks at one and the same time, three concentric centers: exteriorly, the immanent natural summit of the humano-cosmic cone (that is, a mature, planetized noosphere); toward the center is the second zone, the "ecclesiastical" or "christic" zone; and at the very heart, the trinitarian and divine transcendent center.[72]

Thus by considering the christian phenomenon at the point where we left our dialectic at an Omega who was simply a prime mover, we moved to an incarnate God which is the principal doctrine of the christian phenomenon. The biological necessity for group functions toward the future requires the acceptance of a Christ-Omega, a Universal Christ as the crown and culmination of all of cosmogenesis.[73] It is only at this point, when we have abandoned our juridical and familial concepts of Christ and God, when we have investigated the cosmic qualities of the Christ-Universal and seen their relationship with what we know to be biologically and cosmically necessary, can we look to the Omega Point as a divine person, capable of loving and worthy of our love and adoration. The flock is no longer without a shepherd. Men on their way to totalization can look to the Universal Christ as animator and plenitude.

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[72] _Ibid._

[73] _Ibid._, p. 157. Cf. also "Le Christique," March 1955.

And so, too, we can finally understand the ultimate term in the Teilhardian credo: "I believe that the supremely Personal is the Universal Christ."[74] The Universal Christ and an evolutive universe have need one for the other. For just as the Christ needed a human for his conception, so he had to find a summit of the world for his final consummation. This consummation we know from the gospel will occur at the Parousia. Thus, a simple final question in our quest for a rapport between God and man presents itself: When is the Parousia? When will the consummation of the Universal Christ occur? Biologically speaking, what do we know of the final days of the human species?

We have already seen that the universe, by its very structure, in order for it to continue on its evolutive course, must not know complete and total death. In a cosmos a sidereal catastrophe would have been a possibility. But now that we know the world to be cosmogenetic, it seems that the end will not be death nor a catastrophe, but a hypercentration, an eruption of the interior life, an ecstacy. As men approach the end of the world, there could be a kind of spiritual pressure on the limits of the real. At the breaking point, totalized humanity would become one with the Christ Universal. Yet the spiritual attraction of which the Parousia is representative is beyond our conception. It will be the culminating point to the entire process of cosmochristogenesis, when "erit in omnibus omnia Deus."[75]

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[74] "Comment je crois," p. 1.

At this point, a final diagram will be sufficient to show the ultimate convergence of the two faiths: Again OY represents the transcendent faith in God; OX the immanent popular human faith in the future. OZ is the result of their harmony. Point P is the Parousia; M, human maturation. It will be noticed that in the new faith, the Parousia and human maturation coincide. For this reason, we must add that noospheric culmination can come about only through the animating action of the evolutive church, which acts at the heart of humanity. Thus progress arrives at the "Parousiac flash" only by being christified from the within. Only in this case is a

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[75] Cf. OE, IX, 113-44; also OE, VII, 47-55.

"love of evolution" possible.[76]

Conclusion

Until now this third "nature" of Christ has been generally overlooked.[77] Now, however, the new Christ can both raise our hopes and solve our difficulties. Our hopes because no matter how grand the world is, we know Christ is ever grander. And our difficulties, for we cannot conceive of such an immense Christ without being conscious of his adorable personality. In a static universe, a "cosmic" and personal Christ would be an anomaly; but in a cosmogenetic universe, Christ is literally the Pantocrator. In a christified universe, an evolutive super-milieu makes its appearance in which each person participates by what he holds most dear: his liberty. All opposition between universal and personal vanishes. No single ego can approach the christic center without moving the entire sphere a little closer. "Ascending or descending, every operation . . . is ultimately pan-humanizing and pan-christifying at the same time."[78]

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[76] Cf. Fig. 7, p. 341 above; "Trois choses que je vois," p. 12.

[77] Teilhard notes the irony in the fact that theology has been so precise in specifying the "sub-branches" of the christian phylum (for example, doctrines of the annunciation, assumption, virgin birth, etc.) and yet has never seen the meaning of the Universal-Christ.

[78] "Le Christique," p. 11.

Nevertheless, the problem of action seems to remain--as it has all throughout the discussion of cosmogenesis and christogenesis. Yet if we can understand the universal Christ even this problem is soluble, for it is he himself who excites the expectation in us for the supreme summit of consciousness. This is the very meaning of religion, and here, the religion of evolution. The whole measure of religion in a cosmogenetic universe is, as we have seen, its power for evolutive activation, for pushing on toward the future. On the side of the humanist pantheisms, there is not enough "push" to stimulate man's confidence to advance toward the supremely desirable, while in the traditional religions (sub-Manichean) there is not enough "pull." If the neo-humanists' sky is too low, the theists' is too high and the atmosphere too rarified. The new God of the new harmonized religion is needed.[79]

The new God, Christ-Omega; allows us then not only to hope and to believe, but to love. And this is the very name of the influence which pulls the psychic centers toward Omega. A man becomes aware of his personal relation with a supreme person following three principles.

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[79] Ibid., pp. 12 ff.

1. Totalization by love of his individual acts. Most of us do not live totally. This is why humans can die impoverished and deceived; they are not able to love. But man discovers that his actions are limitless by his belief in an Omega who in brightening the summit of the cone of time, and in diffusing his presence, makes what was cold, dead and impersonal, vibrant with life stronger than that of the beholder. The difference is not in the stuff of things, but in the intensity in which it is lived.

2. Totalization by love of the individual himself. The second stage is reached when all acts taken together become a single, unique act. In discovering Omega, I discover that in a certain way all things become the same thing: I have the impression that I am always doing the same thing. This unity serves only to accentuate the various elements in which I participate because union differentiates. In a human life it is certainly different to see, to think, to grow, to diminish, to understand, to love. But with the vision of Omega, these diverse activities become infinitely varied modalities of the same universal contact.

> When, by the progress in our hearts of the love for the All, we feel, beyond the diversity of our efforts and our desires, the exuberant simplicity of an élan wherein are mingled and exalted without being lost, the innumerable nuances of passion and action, it is

> then, in the bosom of the mass formed by human Energy, that each of us approaches the plenitude of our efficacy and our personality.[80]

3. Totalization by love of individuals in humanity. The critical point is the passage of the individual to the collective. We fear to lose our liberty; but in sailing past the Charybdis of collectivisms, we only encounter the Scylla of anarchisms. The dilemma can be settled only if the end is personal. And so, love one another, the two thousand year-old aphorism takes on a whole new meaning, more profound, and more significant. To be perfect, love one another--or, we might add, you will perish. The only answer to the present crisis, where the passage between anarchy and totalitarian collectivity is becoming more and more apparent and dangerous, the only answer is a common "conspiration" of personal love.[81]

Through these successive stages, a person is ultra-personalized. And through these same stages, humanity--as a whole--must also pass. What is true on the personal level is also true on the collective level. At the center of the relationship between man and the universe is the renewed christian phenomenon. Despite its present obscurity and difficulties, christianity's major doctrine is the personal union of God and man, a union to be achieved by love. This is the central axis of the christian phylum followed by Paul, Augustine and Teresa. And so it is that we can assert that christianity can be a "phylum of love" in the heart of the universe. Only now does the risen Christ take on his fullest meaning for us, only now can we rightfully and more profoundly understand the revelation of the Parousia. The risen Christ cannot arrive at the consummation of creation without incorporating himself into its evolution. Thus Christ and the universe are but a sphere calling for a center, and a center waiting for a sphere. The conjunction of the two will see "the birth, for the first time on Earth, of a love as wide and as strong as the Universe." After the biosphere and the noosphere, the Theosphere.[82]

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[80] OE, VI, 186.

[81] To respond in violence to the contemporary acute difficulties is in effect to have abandoned the hope of bringing humanity to its ultimate limits.

This "super-love" is love reborn. It is love dynamized, that is, it cannot refrain from moving on to the final, superior term. It is love universalized. It does not wish to concentrate on a few souls floating in a neutral or hostile universe. Rather it is passionately devoted to promote all cosmic forces so that the Universal Christ can be born in us. It is a pantheized love, that is, it strives not simply to adhere to God at a single central point of our being, but to commune with him through the Universe.[83] This love already exists. Now for the first time there are men capable of living for and loving evolution, and at the same time capable of speaking of and to God. The signs are seen everywhere, but most specially in the world of research. Research in the last century has become as vital as nourishment and reproduction. It is not simple curiosity, but evolution in its hominized state. It is man's taking charge of evolution; man's most important action today.[84] Research is contemporary man's highest form of adoration. The new christian does not wish to annihilate the flesh, but to sublimate and sanctify it; he does not seek peace and silence of soul, but spiritual power; the christian saint is not he who avoids matter, but he who pushes it beyond itself.[85]

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[82] Cf. OE, VI, 184-97; OE, IX, 213-15.

The culmination of cosmo-christogenesis is the ancient doctrine of the pleroma, the union of the created and the uncreated, of God and the Universe. The movement has already begun and the christian can further supply the answers by a synthetic act: the spirit of detachment and conquest, of tradition and adventurous research, the synthesis of the earth and God. This is the pleroma, when God will be all in all.[86]

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[83] Cf. "Christianisme et evolution."

[84] Cf. OE, IX, 255-63.

[85] "Introduction à la vie chrétienne," p. 9.

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[86] Cf. Cahier 4, "La parole attendu," pp. 28-29; "Trois choses que je vois"; and "La route de l'ouest."

CHAPTER VII

DECIDING ABOUT THE BUD

"The simple admission of this resolutely organicist and realist perspective suffices . . . to give a new and singular relief to the vicissitudes of the human adventure in the general history of the Earth."[1] We had begun this essay in search of a new vision of the world because we had found modern man floundering for lack of such a vision. The evolutionary humanists, we saw, are convinced that only a new, all-embracing idea system can actually save humanity from itself. They demand a more integrating view of history at the base of this idea system--a history which sees no radical break between infra-human and human development and which takes a humanly controlled direction. We saw the evolutionary humanist as a man who believes that nature can reveal the answers to man's ultimate questions, and who is aware and accepts the profound realities of love and human interiority.

Challenged by the neo-humanist rejection of former world-views, we investigated, in a general and non-exhaustive fashion, the major world views since archaic man, and then, in more detail, those of the Western world. We recognized the truth in the neo-humanist position: modern man finds himself in a series of seemingly inextricable dilemmas when he attempts to come to grips with his ultimate questions and responses. All of the historic world-views offer answers to some or all the questions, but none of them can answer every question in a satisfactory and harmonious manner, and thus the entire integrative thrust of the idea system is mitigated or completely lost. The result has been a double tendency. Contemporary man selects portions of the varied idea-systems to fit his need or he denies the necessity for an integrating view of the universe, leaving himself in a senseless world. "For all his discoveries and inventions, twentieth-century man is a sad creature."[2]

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[1] "Comment je vois."

To this very sadness, anxiety, and fear Teilhard addresses himself. We have carefully followed him through an extremely complicated explanation of the universe which begins with biological facts and ends in their integration with the christian revelation. It remains for us now to specify the Teilhardian answers to those ultimate questions to which man has always directed himself, and to discover how an acceptance of the new Teilhardian vision can aid in solving the contemporary dilemmas.

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[2] *OE*, V, 390 (*FM*, p. 299).

Teilhard stands in the evolutionary humanist tradition. Huxley wrote of him:

> He has effected a threefold synthesis--of the material and physical world with the world of mind and spirit; of the past with the future; and of variety with unity, the many with the one. . . . As a result he has helped us to define more adequately both our own nature, the general evolutionary process, and our place and role in it.[3]

And Teilhard stands firmly, too, in the christian tradition with its affirmations of a personal, redeeming God and the union of humans with him through his incarnated son. Science and faith--we have already seen that their conjunction and interfecundation was Teilhard's life work. Whatever the result may be called: a philosophy of history, a theology of history, a Weltanschauung, a cosmology, a phenomenology of history--little matters the name if it can be seen to help extricate man from his modern dilemma.

Man's Origins

Contemporary man must contend with the problem of human origins, although it is perhaps the least pressing of his ultimate questions. No longer is there the urgent dichotomy between traditional religious thinking and the scientific facts and demonstrations of evolution. Almost everyone today accepts the facts of science, and if he is a christian, he accepts divine creation as being non-contradictory to these facts. Yet there are two distinct questions here: the origins of the universe and of the earth, and the origins of man. The christian has perhaps the most difficulty, for on the question of universal origins, he is seemingly committed to the Greco-scholastic answer of creation *ex nihilo sui et subjecti*. And on the question of human origins, he seems bound to a doctrine of monogenism. It is, of course, true that on the theological level the doctrine of universal creation poses no grave problem. Scripture and dogmatic scholars have shown that the essential religious meaning of creation is dependence upon God. Theology does not seem to search for the mechanism, but wishes to assert simple and complete dependence. Thus sidereal cataclysms and catastrophes are perfectly valid--indeed, so is any hypothesis, as long as it recognizes and safeguards the fact of faith: that whatever has come into being owes this being to God alone.

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[3] PH, pp. 11, 26.

The solution on the philosophical level, however, is hardly as simple. Teilhard based his criticism here on the viability of the traditionally accepted scholastic explanation's allowing only for an initial creative phase and then transformation affected by secondary causes (divine conservation). But in this theory all distinctions between orders of being are rendered merely logical, intellectual, and purely artificial. Second, it does not explain the real physical dependence of the diverse organs in the universe. And third, the scholastic thesis offers no absolute value to the efforts of secondary causes. In short, the traditional interpretation creates a static, atomistically isolated universe. Scientific facts, however, show otherwise. They demonstrate that there are real differences between the various orders of being in the world--that a rock and a plant and a man are really differing orders. Yet they are physically interdependent one upon the other. And ordinary human experience demands some kind of absolute worth in human actions.[4]

Teilhard's answer to the problem of origins lies in his theory of creative union. There is, quite naturally, no question of being able to verify either universal or human origins. This is the "blank of emergence."[5] But this does not mean that there is no correspondence between the ontological meaning of creation and the historical facts. For "we have no serious reason to think that things are not made following the same rhythm according to which our experience reveals them."[6] This said, creation actually consists in the unifying action which takes place in the multiple: creation _ex nihilo subjecti_ simply means to invert the power of dispersion, of the multiple. The concept of positive nothingness (that is, the real existence of dispersion), however, risks creating a new Manichaeism. And of course if creation is seen as the unification of the multiple, the making of the one from the many, the gratuitousness of creation seems lost. But gratuitousness is a cardinal doctrine in christian teaching. In fact this objection, asserts Teilhard, is merely verbal and, in a sense, is born of an exclusive reliance on the personal attributes of God. Nothing seems to hinder us from supposing that if there actually exists an absolute Unity, there should not be an opposite pole, infinite multiplicity.[7]

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[4] Cf. "Sur la notion de transformation créatrice"; also Cahier 4, p. 10; OE, VI, 88; "Le coeur de la matière"; "Trois choses que je vois"; and "Comment je vois."

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[5] "From this experimental point of view, there is no consideration of a beginning of the Universe, because all analyzed phenomena force one to go backward to an anterior phenomenon, indefinitely" (cited by Henri de Lubac, _La pensée du Pere Teilhard de Chardin_ [Paris: Aubier, 1962], p. 285). "Every beginning resists a clear understanding: we always grasp things beginning, never the pure beginning" (Jean Mouroux, _Le mystère du temps_ [Paris: Aubier, 1962], chap. ii).

[6] _ETG_, p. 184.

Such is the first moment of creation, that is, the purely divine action which corresponds to the structure of reality. In order to valorize, however, the action of secondary agents (that is, all other causes not God), Teilhard introduces the concept of creative transformation. This is a sui generis action, through which a completely new being is created. In the philosophy of creative union, there are varying modes of unification. On the side of the supreme creator, this is seen as the "battle" against the multiple. On the side of creatures, there is an equally valid type of unification. This is seen most clearly, for instance, on the thresholds reached periodically in biological evolution. At each threshold, the newly evolved product is both extremely different (that is, qualitatively different) from its predecessors, but is also organically linked with that predecessor. At each step, something new appears: a unification has occurred. In short, "creation"--and by the very actions of creatures themselves.[8]

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[7] Ibid., pp. 185-86.

[8] "Sur la notion de transformation créatrice," p. 2.

Creation thus conceived is not a periodic intrusion of God into nature. Rather it is an act coextensive with the duration of the universe. Thus God did not first create the sun, the earth, then man, etc. At the beginning of the sensible world there was multiplicity: the first quasi-organic act of the creator.[9] Unification is achieved both by the attraction of God (on the ultimate level) and by the work of creative transformation affected by other beings (on a secondary level).[10]

The advantages of this explanation serve to eliminate some of the contemporary dilemma. It respects the organic continuity among all beings; it gives proper value to the actions of secondary causes; it recognizes the value of matter (the multiple); it lessens the gratuity of creation without eliminating it; it safeguards the christian concept of dependence on God while at the same time recognizing the human value of action. No longer can creation be seen as something arbitrary, but rather as the gradual, systematic unification of a primordial multiple.[11]

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[9] ETG, p. 186.

[10] OE, IX, 107-08.

[11] At the same time, the Teilhardian view of creative union raises its own problems, especially concerning the ultimate multiple. It is difficult to see that

If creation means unification, then contemporary man can be more at ease in his own world. For he will recognize that he himself, insofar as he works to conquer the multiple, insofar as he does battle with multiplicity, he himself is creating. Thus his everyday actions take on much greater significance than heretofore. With the older scholastic view, these actions had only secondary value insofar as they reflected the primary work of God, who alone was the real actor on the stage of the universe. In the theory of creative union, the christian can at last accept what non-christians have already long become convinced of, namely, that there is some sort of absolute worth in every human action and undertaking, that there is no real scandal in matter. At the same time, the non-christian can remove what had been the annoying side of the human reality. For all the worth of human action, humans themselves and their earth seemed a joke, a game, an accident of nature. Thus the irony: with all its value, life is so precarious that the entire human undertaking is to be regarded

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on the theoretical level Teilhard has completely escaped from Manichaeanism or, even more important, has placed an ontological postulate at the base of his explanation of universal origins. These difficulties weaken the Teilhardian response on the philosophical level. Nevertheless, these very weaknesses may be suggestive of more acceptable solutions. Cf. Smulders, The Design of Teilhard de Chardin, pp. 77 ff.

with a cold and sceptic eye. This meaninglessness and senselessness disappears as it becomes apparent that creation is not a single divine interference in the laws of nature, but the actual structure of nature itself, a structure in which man surely participates.[12]

What of the question of human origins? The evolutionary concept has already been more than sufficiently discussed. However, according to the traditional christian belief the human soul was infused into a single original couple. Such a view, obviously, is not in accord with what we have already said about creation. For it allows a special act of divine intervention in the case of human beings. The question is thus posed: how to preserve the traditional christian teaching while fully accepting scientific fact. Teilhard rightly notes that mono- and polygenisms are purely theological notions and are extra-scientific by their very nature. For science can never get to the very origins of things which by their structure efface themselves. Science can speak only for monophyletism, that is the existence of the unity of the human species--that man is a unique branch of life--or for polyphyletism. Thus, a scientist approaching the problem of monogenism must admit that directly he can say nothing about an individual Adam. But he can say that indirectly the existence of a single mutation in a single couple seems infinitely improbable and against all the laws of nature. Science thus could speak against the notion of monogenism, without, however, being able to prove either its falsity or veracity. Theology, too, is moving in the same direction, for scriptural form critics now interpret the Genesis Adam and Eve as representatives of the human phylum. Christian theology is thus slowly accepting an evolutionary doctrine of human origins which can recognize both scientific evidences as well as the facts of revelation.[13]

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[12] Cf. OE, IV, 31-67, for these same conclusions, but expressed in terms of a spiritual theology (DM, pp. 17-43).

Evil

Teilhard's explanation of universal and human origins as a creative unification of multiplicity suggests the solution of two other contemporary dilemmas: the problem of evil and man's place in nature.

Like so many others before him who grappled with the ultimate meaning of man's existence, Teilhard was forced to face what is perhaps the most difficult problem of all: the understanding of evil. And despite the many criticisms to the contrary, Teilhard was acutely aware of suffering and pain, and his own explanation for it occupies an important place in his writings.

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[13] "Monogenisme et monophyletisme." Cf. also Smulders, The Design of Teilhard de Chardin, pp. 45-85 (French, pp. 57-97). The theologian will have special interest in understanding how the problem of the creation of the human soul might be solved. He is referred to Robert North, Teilhard and the Creation of the Soul (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1957).

Teilhard's theory of evil is so simple and flows so naturally from the philosophy of creative union, that once accepted one wonders why the intellectual understanding of evil should be problematic at all. Simply said, Teilhard sees evil as a by-product of evolution. In a universe that is closed, made up of closed particles, suffering becomes unintelligible. But in a cosmos which is rather a cosmogenesis, that is, where the universe is that which is achieved, the groping aspect of evolution becomes more apparent. Where all is movement and growth there is sure to be mistakes, retrograde forces, diminishments; in short, pain, suffering, sin, evil.

In his "Outline of a Personal Universe,"[14] Teilhard anticipated his critics. If creative union is correct and if in general his vision of the world is correct, it would seem that the world is "bathing in joy." Why then the pain, the tears and the blood? Why suffering? Because the world is becoming unified, personalized, is converging. In this kind of world, suffering is most natural and in fact most necessary, first because of its basis in plurality. Plurality, multiplicity is the most obvious cause of our sufferings. Not only the thousand forms of physical disorders which we can undergo, but the plurality of the psychomoral order. We have but to think of all those who were born to be united and lack the opportunity and of how much life is made up of mere lucky encounters. Often those who truly love each other are separated, and even when they are not, the risks undertaken in the interior development of their contacts, the labyrinths, the impasses, the divergent paths--all these show the pains of multiplicity. In the Divine Milieu, Teilhard speaks of the "external passivities of diminution":

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[14] OE, VI, 67-114.

> We have only to look back on our lives to see them springing up on all sides: the barrier which blocks our way, the wall that hems us in, the stone which throws us from our path, the obstacles that break us, the invisible microbe that kills the body, the little word that infects the mind, all the incidents and accidents of varying importance and varying kinds, the tragic interruptions (upsets, shocks, amputations, deaths) which come between the world of "other" things and the world that radiates out from us.[15]

But the pain of plurality is merely one type of evil in our lives. There is also the pain of differentiation. Because unification (which defines our universe) is work, a laborious ascension out of plurality toward unity, it operates under a sort of ontological inertia. Often in the campaign of conquest for the great work of building the universe, we forget the pain. But it is nonetheless real: for union with others it is necessary to renounce self. Our most common ideas about human perfection are thus always expressed in metaphors of work and of upward movement. Each progressive step toward union is paid by an equivalent sum of suffering. "No progress in being without some mysterious tribute of tears, blood and sin."[16] To complicate all this there are the "internal passivities of diminution": "natural failings, physical defects, intellectual or moral limitations, as a result of which the field of our activities, of our enjoyment, of our vision, has been ruthlessly limited since birth";[17] weaknesses which grow with age, interior rebellions and tyrannies which sap our energies, the light and life in which we live: age, lack of possessions.

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[15] OE, IV, 82 (DM, p. 53).

Finally, perhaps it can be said that true sorrow consists in man's discovery of his own capacity for diminishment: the bitter menace which is the only true evil, the evil of the person: Death.

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[16] OE, VII, 256.

[17] OE, IV, 83 (DM, p. 53).

> In death, as in an ocean, all our slow or swift diminishments flow out and merge. Death is the sum and consummation of all our diminishments: it is evil itself. . . .[18]

But even death is explicable in a cosmogenetic universe for it represents the pain of metamorphosis. It follows the same laws as all changes of state: one is asked to abandon oneself to a transformation which seems to carry one beyond all already acquired. As the point of metamorphosis approaches, it becomes clear that one cannot grow without changing.

At final accounting, however, what makes evil wicked is not suffering, but the feeling of being diminished by suffering. No matter how great the suffering, if one can find a correlative success proportionate to the sorrow undergone a kind of pleasure can be derived. If we can be convinced that all our sufferings and even death are undertaken because we belong to a universe-in-the-making, that there exists a natural center of things, then sorrow can be conquered by the cosmic sense, our pains lost in the fever of the conquest.[19]

All evil--ontological (nothingness, multiplicity), physical (suffering), and moral (sin)--is thus manifested under three aspects of the same groping action of evolutionary change. At each new threshold reached by the universe, there is a new crisis of multiplicity. And so in the appearance of the human, there is a veritable "crisis of individuation" and the appearance of sin: concupiscence, pride, egoism. Wherefore, the battle against evil, that is, against the forces of multiplicity, is continually being fought on a double front. The principle of unity as we have seen is Christ-Omega, and his first and most important gesture is to reduce evil to the minimum, to do battle with multiplicity. This is merely a negative way of saying that the primary act of Omega is creation, union, convergence. On a second level, however, we also engage in combat against evil. And even in spite of our apparent defeat (no matter what we do we will grow old and we will die), we have the assurance of the final victory; first because of the Christ-event (Incarnation-Redemption); second, because we know that the whole movement of evolution toward Omega is a movement of unification and total organization; and third because we recognize that love--the energy of unification itself--entails the loss and metamorphosis of self. In this sense, the great triumph of creation and of love-energy is Death. In the cosmogenetic view, instead of representing the triumph of evil, death is precisely the culmination, the entry to that very union which we have passed a lifetime seeking. Evil, then, has a very positive effect. For in its final and most virulent form, death, it allows for communion; communion through diminution.[20]

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[18] OE, IV, 84 (DM, p. 54). [19] Cf. OE, VI, 105-10.

I do not think that this view of the meaning of evil is so overly optimistic as to be unrealistic. On the contrary, it seems to provide an answer to contemporary man's present situation vis-a-vis the problem of evil. Once man can see that he is a part of an evolving cosmos, a universe on the way of convergence, then evil takes its place as a truly necessary part of such a universe. It is no less ugly, no less a cause of sorrow, hurt, and anxiety. But it no longer remains unintelligible; it can be intellectually understood, if not psychologically apprehended. The anguish caused by the deformed baby, by the department store blaze, by hurricances, tornadoes, wars, and all the rest--this anguish remains. But the question "why" can now receive a kind of answer: such is the structure of a universe-in-evolution. And in spite of all temptation and appearances to the contrary, we have an assurance that all is not in vain; we know that the world cannot not succeed.

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[20] Cf. OE, IV, 86-96 (DM, pp. 55-63); ETG, pp. 124-32. Herein lies Teilhard's vision of christian resignation which if accepted could restructure traditional religious asceticism.

Man's Place in Nature

Closely allied with the problem of evil is the question of original sin and the fall which colors the christian view of man's place in nature.[21] For the christian, the source of evil is sin and no matter how alluring the Teilhardian "evil-as-by-product" theory appears, the reality of sin is little shaken or disturbed. It is this doctrine, which impedes the contemporary christian from being reconciled with nature, which hinders him from experiencing that oneness which was so much a part both of the archaic and of the classical world views.[22]

The problem is this: there is absolutely no scientific evidence for the existence of a golden age, nor for the existence within this paradise of a single man endowed with all sorts of great privileges. All scientific evidence offers human origins as humble, imperfect and full of defects, placed on a very wide base and characterized by much groping, trial and error. "When taken in addition to the mysterious aura that has always surrounded the question of original sin, these factors explain the uneasiness felt by many minds on this subject."[23]

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[21] Cf. above, chap. ii.

[22] Cf. Smulders, The Design of Teilhard de Chardin, pp. 162 ff. (French, pp. 173 ff.). "The story of the Fall paralyzes before our very eyes the necessary establishment of a christian Weltanschauung, fully human and humanizing" ("Reflexions sur le peché original," 15 November 1947, p. 1).

Teilhard rightly suspected that the whole doctrine of original sin was an attempt to explain the problem and origins of evil. For St. Paul says that "through sin, death": so that death is seen in the traditional christian view as a result of sin, and, on the scale of humanity, the result of the original sin and the consequent fall.

However, there are some obvious difficulties in such a doctrine. Obviously animals died before the fall (no one holds today that a period of time numbered in hours lapsed between the coming of animals and the appearance of man on earth), and so would man. This probably, of course was not clear to St. Paul, who envisioned the creation story in a seven-day period. To him, the origin of evil and the consequent introduction of a disruption between man and nature could have occurred because of a fault committed by an individual human. And even allowing for a wider interpretation in terms of real evolutionary duration, such an explanation could be accepted only if we wish to confine the concept of fall and redemption simply to the earth and not to the universe. However, if this be admitted, then other passages of St. Paul and New Testament writers concerning the cosmic proportions of the redemption become absolutely meaningless. The only choice then is to change the concept of original sin and the fall.[24]

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[23] Smulders, The Design of Teilhard de Chardin, p. 162 (French, p. 174). Cf. also "Notes sur quelques représentations historiques possibles du péché original," 2-11 August 1924, p. 33.

The Teilhardian answer comes as no surprise. If death is co-extensive with time and space, then original sin is also (since St. Paul does say: From sin, death). Thus we are led to suppose that original sin is not saying something about man's history, but something about man's nature. The creative act being intelligible as a gradual process of arrangement and unification, the primordial nothingness has nothing directly sinful about it; but in unifying itself, there will clearly be suffering and faults. Statistically, it is inevitable that in a vast and slow course of organization, local disorders will appear resulting from the primordial collective state of multiplicity. On the infra-human levels, this is suffering; on the human level, disorder takes the form of moral suffering or sin. With this view, the cone of time takes the following graphic form (Fig. 9).[25] It respects the facts and evidences of science, takes into account the reality of evil and explains it, and justifies the theology of original sin and salvation. Original sin, thus, becomes not an isolated fact, but a state.[26]

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[24] Cf. "Christ, rédemption et géocentrie," July 1920; "Christologie et évolution," Christmas 1933; and "Note sur quelques représentations historiques possibles du péché original."

The advantages of this explanation also open up wider and more unifying possibilities in the christian explanation of the redemption and incarnation. Once it is accepted that creation is not a once-for-all act, but is coextensive with space and time, then redemption and incarnation can be understood as two other faces of this same movement toward union. For God to create, he must unite himself with that which he creates (thus, the incarnation), and in doing so participate in the suffering and evil undergone in creation (redemption). Under the attraction of the divine "I," secondary egos are constituted (creation). But by reason of this very operation, the divine immerses himself in his own work (incarnation). This immersion and creation when viewed as "en ev : the evolutive cone (of creation, incarnation, and redemption)

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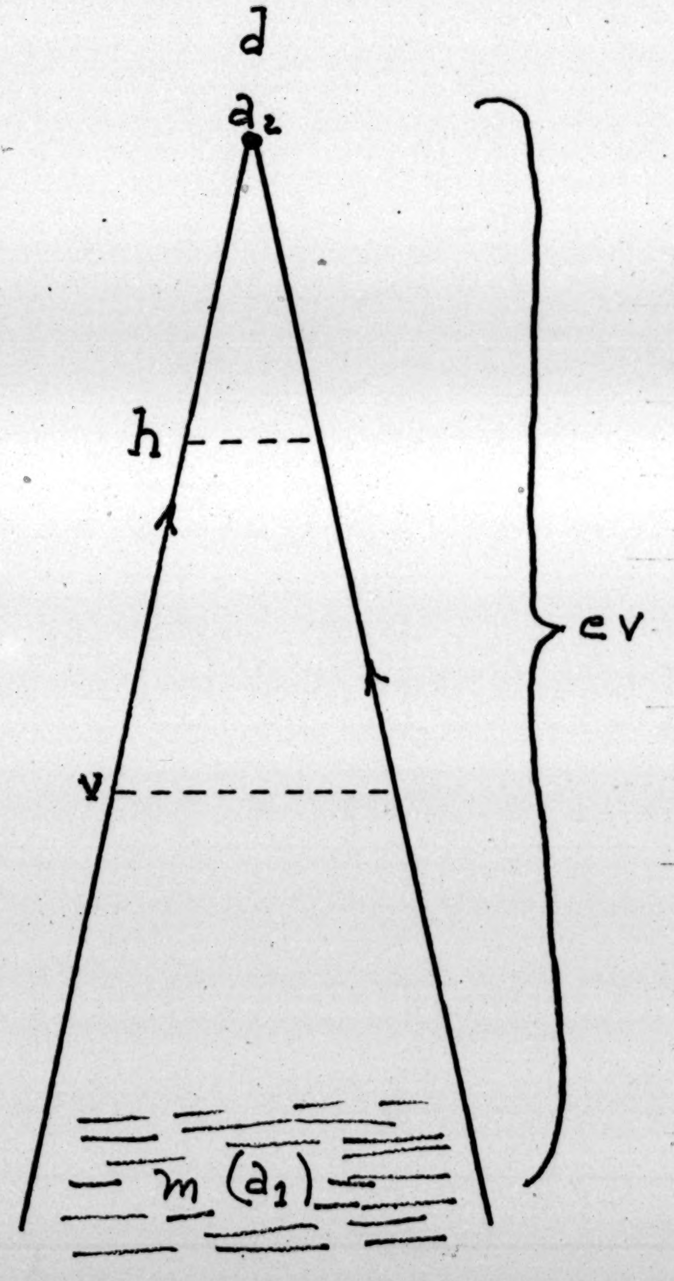
[25] Fig. 9 taken from "Réflexions sur le péché original."

[26] Cf. ibid.



d = god, the divine

a_2 = Christ, the second adam

m = the multiple (primordial, non-sinful, "creatable" form of Nothingness; functional equivalent of the "first adam" source of statistical Evil)

h = level of the appearance of human freedom (and of sin)

v = level of the appearance of life and of suffering

Fig. 9.--The Evolutive Cone of Time

cours" is called redemption. Creation, being impossible without evil appearing as a shadow, the battle against this remnant of disorganization is called redemption. So it is that the cross, accepted by so many as a symbol of expiation and suffering, can become representative of conquest and effort.[27]

It is true that the three moments of unification (creation-redemption-incarnation) are represented by localizable acts. But the appearance of the human type, the birth of Christ and his death are but the expressions of a cosmic process.[28] This process could be properly named pleromization, that is, the ultimate union of God and the universe. In a religion of pleromization, it is rather obvious that there occurs a complete change of outlook in regard to sin, evil, sacrifice and obligation. The intellectual solution to the problem of evil makes sin more intelligible, less frightening (but, of course, none the less evil), and it becomes more possible to do battle against it without its having a debilitating and withering force on human energy and effort.

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[27] Cf. "Quelques vues générales sur l'essence du christianisme."

[28] Cf. ibid.

In the Teilhardian view, then, man is reintegrated into nature and finds himself at one with it simply because he sees himself as having emerged from the world of nature. Man recognizes that his roots are in nature and that his appearance on earth is radically dependent upon it and its evolutionary movement. Through his explanations of evil, original sin, and the fall, Teilhard manages to reinvigorate the Faustian spirit, blunted by a christianity of angelism and Pelagianism or at least semi-Pelagianism. Yet on the other hand, the Teilhardian message also refutes the oriental viewpoint, wherein man is indeed a part of nature, yet striving to undo an attachment to which he is mysteriously and primitively condemned to partake in endless cycles. Far from regarding the multiple as an illusion, Teilhard sees it as a means of salvation and ultimate fullness. "Heaven is not opposed to Earth, but is born from the conquest and the transformation of the Earth."[29]

The problem of man's rapport with nature is, evidently, a very complex one. I do not think that Teilhard provides a solution to all of its aspects, but simply to some of its intellectual and spiritual facets. Whether this phase of the man-nature problem can be understood and accepted in an increasingly "un-natural" atmosphere (that is, an atmosphere completely removed or only distantly related with the world of nature), in the urban sprawl and ugliness which is already dominating the nations of the world, and whether the modern technocrat is even capable of envisioning the problem not to mention any kind of solution--this we must leave to others to investigate. At least we can here affirm that a solution in terms of theory is available: a theory out of which a man who wishes it can bring his life to terms with the nature from which he is born.[30] It is unnecessary, perhaps, to insist that no theory is really capable of leading to actions unless it is verified by experiment and buttressed by the facts of ordinary life. It is to these questions that architects, city planners, economists, sociologists, and psychologists can address themselves.

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[29] Cf. "La route de l'ouest; l'apport spirituel de l'extrême-orient," 8 September 1932.

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[30] The problem of man's psychological divorce from nature is at least being recognized and grappled with. A news dispatch, appearing in the International Herald Tribune, 4 July 1967, stated in part: "Oldrich Cernib, Deputy Prime Minister and chief state planner of Czechoslovakia told two hundred fifty architects from more than seventy countries that the problems of restoring the biological and psychological balance for urban man requires international collaboration and the exchange of experience."

Teilhardian Eschatology

Nevertheless all the theories in the world about man's origins, the problem of evil and his bonds with nature would come to nothing unless another source of disquiet and anxiety be removed. This is the problem of man's destiny. Is man really going somewhere? Does life have a meaning? Or is it merely an illusion, terminating in a dead-end, playing a kind of cruel trick on the dreams and desires of mankind? Religious interpretations of history give an affirmative answer to man's destiny as do all of the schools of scientific progress and marxism. Opposing these are the cyclicists and the determinist schools with all their variations. The dominant mood of modern man, however, is a strong affirmation of some kind of direction in human life, a real belief in progress despite the assaults made upon this belief by twentieth-century events and philosophies derived from these events. The twentieth century belief in progress is not, of course, the unquestioning naivete of the nineteenth century. Nor is it as certain of the concretization of its goals or of the means to arrive at them. There is definite confusion as to the nature of these goals: human perfection, human transformation, union with the divine, unlimited expansion, the superman. All of these ideas are in some way shared, each school of thought adapting words to suit its own consistency. The dilemma, in fact, on this level is really not so much a question of whether or not man is going somewhere. Rather it is a question of the specification of these goals.

Reflection on the problem of man's destiny can lead us to pose the following questions: What can and do we know about the nature of the "end-times"? What is the nature of man's movement toward the "end-times"? How does the question of man's destiny influence man's present? The answer to the first will lead us to a discussion of the end of the world. To the second we reply with the theory of progress. And to the third, we take up the discussion of the meaning of the present, God's activity on and with man, and the problem of action.

From all that we have studied in the vision of Teilhard, it is hardly surprising to affirm that the end-times are in some way a summit, an apogee of that process of unification which describes the movement of the cosmos. On the human level, unarranged man yields to arranged man, engaged in a process of totalization. The point of ultimate arrangement and unification is called Point Omega. How will ultimate unification take place? What will the end be like? Teilhard devoted several pages to the question, for the problem of man's destiny becomes increasingly important as a collective issue. In order to unite we ought to know why, the answer to which will determine the form of our liaisons as well as their strength and direction.

Teilhard sees four possibilities for the termination of the human phylum: senescence, paroxyms, extinction, transformation. The first, senescence, is the most obvious and consistent answer for those who wish to take the biological analogy to its extreme with no modification. It is the position of Spengler, perhaps even of Toynbee, and surely of all cyclicists. For if we study the biological laws which govern the universe nothing is more apparent than the law of entropy which dictates the gradual loss of energy and the final mortal cooling of the universe. What is to prevent the human phylum from escaping this inexorable law? For one of the more obvious facts in human history is that after an ascent to a certain height and perfection, there follows a decline.

To counter this argument, Teilhard marshalls all of the data we have already studied to show that the universe is in fact convergent and that entropy is but the negative face of the positive force of life or spiritual energy. Thus the end of the human phylum will not be a senescence; it cannot die of old age. The end will rather come in the form of a paroxysm.

But here again we are faced with a choice: a paroxysm of death, of extinction, or one of transformation? In The Phenomenon of Man, Teilhard states a kind of basic principle in the matter: All pessimistic representations of the end-times must be definitively set aside because they are only extrapolations of our own individual goals and ends, not that of life as a whole.[31] With a single movement, Teilhard sweeps aside all of the fabulous science faction stories of the possible tragic ends of man: the invasion of microbes, organic counter-evolutions, sterility, war, cosmic catastrophe (astral collisions and the like), biological disagregations. To imagine that these conclusions to the ascent of life are possible is to imagine that the universe will commit its own abortion! And if this possibility really exists, human action would cease at this moment, devoured by the sense of its own uselessness and futility. Thus, the biological chain: life → reflection → prevision → need for survival → Omega.[32]

Man thus must reach his goal, a goal which, judging by all the story of the past, will not occur for a long time. Man has not been on earth longer than a million and a half years. Now, entering the second stage of his evolution (totalization), there is no reason to believe that it should be any shorter than the previous stage. And in terms of the history of the universe, a million years is negligible. Teilhard finds no particular problem with those arguments against such a long duration of human history based upon a lack of material resources. Here he places unlimited confidence in science, ambition and wisdom: the inventiveness of the human mind can solve the problem of material resources.[33]

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[31] OE, I, 304-08 (PH, pp. 274-76).

[32] Cf. OE, VII, 47-55.

Clearly then the end of man will not be a destructive paroxysm, in which humanity will be finally annihilated. Rather, man will be transformed; there will be a gradual replacement of external pressure by an internal attraction toward Omega. This is that "violent and profound" taste and sense of the irreversibility of the world, founded upon the knowledge and necessity of universal perfection in Omega.[34] We can best summarize Teilhard's views here by quoting what he had to say in "Three Things I See":

> In this perspective, Humanity, limited even to its very planetary support, will terminate its existence (or, more precisely, will be detached from it) not by an external catastrophic blow, nor by some schism

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[33] Cf. OE, II, 340-50 (AM, pp. 246-54).

[34] Cf. OE, II, 231-34 (AM, pp. 68-71).

> or internal exhaustion, but by access to a certain critical state of metamorphoses (a maximum of psychic tension joined to a maximum of technical arrangement) beyond which we distinguish nothing more in the future, precisely because it is a question of a veritable "critical point" of emergence, and of an immersion beyond the temporal-spatial matrix of the Universe.[35]

Teilhard's view of the end of the world and man's destiny is of course united with his cristian faith. In this perspective, the end of the world and the second coming of Christ are intimately related, the one as the ground for the other. Since the Church of Christ is actually the innermost and most profound phylum in cosmogenesis, it is through the church that the animating power for man's final paroxysm of transformation comes. Christian revelation makes it clear that the fullness of time will be finally achieved (for it has already begun with the Incarnation) only with the Parousia, the Second Coming of Christ. This will be the end of time, when all will be united in one with the Father: the fullness, the Pleroma. But, according to Teilhard, the Parousia is only possible when humanity itself is capable of receiving the glorified Christ; that is, human maturation is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for the Parousia. From this point of view, the whole activity of the universe is seen as culminating in the Pleroma:

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[35] "Trois choses que je vois," p. 5.

cosmogenesis becomes pleromization and the activity of man is his movement toward maturity so as to make a final choice toward "loving excentration." The final moment, for man, takes on the aspect of choice:

> A more realistic and more Christian view shows us Earth evolving toward a state in which Man, having come into the full possession of his sphere of action, his strength, his maturity and his unity, will at last have become an adult being; and having reached this apogee of his responsibility and freedom, holding in his hands all his future and all his past, will make the choice between arrogant autonomy and loving excentration.
>
> This will be the final choice: revolt or adoration of a world. And then, by an act which will summarize the toil of centuries, by this act (finally and for the first time completely human) justice will ensue and all things be renewed.[36]

Progress

Nothing is more obvious but that the Teilhardian view of human maturation and man's destiny is one of progress. It is a point Teilhard makes clear many times and to which he devoted several essays.[37] And it is, I think, the most important basic affirmation made in all of his teaching.

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[36] OE, V, 31 (FM, p. 19).

[37] These essays, of which there are four of major importance devoted solely to the idea of progress, cover the entire expanse of Teilhardian thought: "Note sur le progrès," 1920; "On Progress," 1921; "Reflexions sur le progrès," 1941; and "Les directions et les conditions de l'avenir," 1948.

Teilhard first expressed his belief in progress and sketched out a rather complete treatise as early as 1921, that is, years before he had arrived at a completely mature vision of cosmogenesis. But so fundamental was his belief in progress and so logically and accurately did he follow up its implications that there is little change from 1921 until the last essay on progress in 1949.[38] Teilhard rightly insists that the idea of progress is rather specific to modern times and emerges from the christian vision of the universe. But the progress theory of man and his universe came into prominence particularly in the eighteenth century because of the evident scientific progress made since the Middle Ages and then because of the discovery of evolution. So powerful was the idea of progress until the twentieth century that it developed as a king of faith, a religion, a mysticism, or even a superstition. In our own times however, there is a kind of setback: the first enthusiasm has waned and many difficulties appear. The reading of Condorcet and Comte strikes us as astonishingly naive and simplistic. Wars and brutalities, the barbarisms of the twentieth century, seem to give the lie to the progress theory. At the same time we have discovered that biological evolution is more complex than at first thought, but nonetheless true.

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[38] The following several paragraphs summarize "Sur le progrès," 1921.

Thus the progress theory is today attacked on three counts: (1) by those with "common sense"--those who claim that belief in progress is, after all, nothing but a faith, and that the real task of modern man is to be realist, "scientific"; (2) by the philosophers: Here a philosophical question is posed: Progress implies self-movement, which, if it is even possible, can lead only to circles. Furthermore, contingent beings cannot require a necessary increase, that is, there is no _necessary_ amelioration in contingent beings. (3) By the religions: The idea of progress deifies man, gives him too much power and denigrates the divine authority. In the end, Teilhard claims that the world is really divided into two principal camps: those who see progress and those who do not; those who say we are moving, and those who say we are not.

How to answer these objections and show that progress is a reality not to be denied? Teilhard responds: While in the early days of the scientific revolution the world was seen as a great clock, put into motion by the watchmaker, today we recognize that "every element and every system of elements in the Universe appears as the term of a development, as the resumé of a history." From stars to atoms, it is apparent that not only have we moved, but we have advanced, become more complex, made a history. On the living level, the same holds true. Using the parameter of consciousness, we see that life is progressive. For those who know how to see: "the world has certainly progressed, because we exist." Thus "progress is _to be more_ (_être plus_), or else it means nothing."

Now while the world appears to have stopped its evolutive motion, this is merely an initial illusion. For the true axis of evolution is in the human brain and human consciousness. On the individual level, humans are fixed, but progress continues on the level of humanity. Analogizing from the individual human being who at ten years, twenty years, and forty years is the same but also amazingly different (that is, there is a true progress from the state of being an infant to that of being a man), humanity too grows to the state of an adult, becoming aware of the All, of participating in something greater than the single individual.

However, and here Teilhard insists that we note well,

> the will of present-day humanity, its intellectual penetration, are not superior, in se, to that of a Plato or an Augustine. The act of man, of humanity has not changed in each of us because of the fact of Progress. But humanity, the act of human nature

> has taken a new plenitude in human consciousness. We are carried on their shoulders, a torch more and more luminous.

Thus it is not the individual human being who is better; rather Progress continues through humanity, through the collectivity. The starting point for us is radically different from that of Plato or Augustine; it is much higher _because_ of Plato and Augustine, and we see farther and more profoundly because they illumined the way.

To the objections posed by the moderns, Teilhard replies: (1) to the realists: Realism shows only that the world is becoming more and more united each day. And to those who oppose the idea of Progress with the facts of wars, famine, and disaster, Teilhard answers: "I do not speak of a _terrestrial Paradise_." The fact of evil in no way detracts or minimizes the fact of Progress, but in fact is seen as the reverse side of progress. (2) To the philosophers: It is not a question of necessary and indefinite progress (as for Condorcet). What is necessary is evolution toward a precise end by human maturation. (3) To the religious objections, Teilhard answers that all moves toward Christ and through him. The conjunction of the Universal-Christ and Omega clarifies the position of man and minimizes the danger of Promethean pride.

Despite the scientific base for Teilhard's theory of progress, he does not deny that it is a faith, because at base it is a way of seeing reality. And he is convinced that this faith still lives:

> Despite the wave of scepticism which seems to have swept away the hopes (too ingenious, no doubt, and too materialistic) on which the nineteenth century lived, faith in the future is not dead in our hearts. Indeed, it is this faith, deepened and purified, which must save us.[39]

In affirming the idea of progress, Teilhard is careful not to fall into two possible excesses. He surely does not see himself as a prophet who knows and foresees the future. Such a pretention would be ridiculous in a man of science, and would be inane in the case of Teilhard who was more than aware of the objections which would be raised against him. But at the same time, he is conscious of the opposite pitfall, affirming that we know nothing of the future which would be tantamount to scepticism--which he abhorred as contrary to all that we know about human beings and the universe. Thus, as he says, all we can show (yet this is already much) are the directions and conditions of the future: the directions = unification, technicization, and rationalization; the conditions = physical survival and sur-centration.

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[39] OE, V, 106 (FM, pp. 80-81); cf. OE, V, 291-305 (FM, pp. 227-37).

The fact that Teilhard's confidence in the future, his faith in progress was never shaken by the events of the twentieth century in which he was an active participant and a witness--indeed, this faith was born in the midst of the trenches of the war of 1914-1918--is testimony to how deeply it was felt and how solidly rooted it was in the ensemble of the Teilhardian faith. In a sense, the idea of progress is the very basis of that faith, the central fact about which all else revolves, the basic explanation of reality. And it was the answer for many problems which beseige modern man, problems which are inexplicable in a static or cyclic world, but which find a happy solution in an evolutive, progressive world, in a cosmogenesis. As Wildiers rightly remarks:

> His gaze toward the future was for him the great discovery of his life: he who would expurgate from his work the considerations on the future or push them aside as of little value, mutilates considerably his conception of the world and despoils it of one of its essential elements.[40]

In fact, Teilhard was much aware that in taking a position in favor of the progress view of history and the world, he was endangering the very acceptance of his vision and exposing it to ridicule and the risk of being completely ignored.

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[40] Wildiers, p. 44.

> One smiles freely at the religious enthusiasm that our fathers naively manifested for progress. Or else, if one still shares it, it is considered in good taste to dissimulate, so as not to be taken as a schoolboy.[41]

Yet even though the progress view seems to have fallen into discredit in the twentieth century, Teilhard vigorously and forcefully reconfirms it:

> We believe in progress and we recognize it around us in the extension of scientific discoveries, in the rough outlines of collective organisms, in the awakening of humanitarian sentiments and sympathies for the universal. "Quantitative progress: additive knowledge, that's all!" they say. "Truly organic and qualitative progress" we reply.[42]

We ought not be surprised that the idea of progress first took on a simplistic form; nor even that today it is seen as a sort of adoration of science.[43] The headiness of the first discoveries and now the truth of its predictions account for the naive fashion in which Progress was explained. Nothing can hold back the progressivist tide:

> The land toward which we wander is perhaps uncertain. No matter. We are not, in any case, an object floating by chance. There is a sense to things. We advance. We progress. The wise smile, or are irritated, when one speaks of progress. They enumerate with complacence the current scandals or they argue original sin to prove that nothing good can come from the Earth. Let us leave the pessimists to the

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[41] OE, VI, 215.

[42] OE, IX, 111.

[43] Cf. OE, VI, 213.

> side, who seem never to have questioned history nor reason nor their heart. Do they believe, these men, that their scepticism will, logically, render the World incomprehensible and kill action in us? Say that consciousness is not better than unconsciousness. Say also that Man, to act, does not need to know that his effort is useful. And so you will have denied the existence and the necessity of Progress. But at the same time you will have destroyed, by your theories, our veritable reasons for living.[44]

Indeed the time for disputing progress is over; it is a fact and a fact to be taken seriously.[45] While we recognize the reality of a humanity totalizing itself more and more each day, we refuse to accept the fact that this movement has any biological reality or value.[46] Nevertheless, despite this pessimism and lack of a biological outlook, nothing is more apparent than the realization that not only does man not remain unchanged, but that he cannot possibly remain the same tomorrow as he is today.[47] It is not really a question of whether man will become "better" or "worse"--these words are too ambiguous in this context to be taken over-seriously. But that man follows the biological law of complexity/

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[44] OE, IX, 110.

[45] "Because of our failure to refer to precise axes and also to consider the curve of the human phenomenon over a sufficient length, we now continue to dispute sentimentally and vaguely about the notion of human perfectibility and the reality of a 'progress'" (OE, VII, 402-04).

[46] Ibid., p. 402.

[47] OE, II, 351 (AM, p. 255).

consciousness is a certain indication of his future.[48] At a time when we had merely six thousand years of written historical record from which to build our knowledge of man and extrapolate upon his future, it is true that a logical description of man's future was difficult to make and there could be endless discussion about man's future; some saw that civilization advanced, others that it was caught in an immovable plan, and still others, like Spengler, saw its gradual decay.[49] No longer is such discussion possible, for with the new perspectives given us by the discovery of evolution, there is an unlimited horizon before and behind us from which to take our bearings.

The new vision gives us the incontrovertible belief in futurism, universalism, and personalism, "the three columns of the future."[50] We cannot claim to be more intelligent than our forefathers. But we do have a "better understanding than they could possess of the dimensions, the demands, potentialities and hopes; above all of the profound unity of the world within and around us."[51] This understanding enables us to sweep aside sceptical and pessimistic interpretations of the world, and opt for a view which alone is consonant with its physical and biological laws: Progress.

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[48] Cf. OE, VII, 403. [49] Cf. OE, IX, 174.

[50] Cf. ibid., p. 178.

[51] OE, V, 48 (FM, p. 32).

Progress and the Critics

Teilhard's option for the theory of progress has caused more confusion than perhaps any other of his affirmations. Such confusion stems merely from a misunderstanding of the Teilhardian thrust, that is, from a lack of harmony in understanding the basic vision. Again, it may be simply a matter of seeing. One cannot accept the Teilhardian solutions to man's ultimate questions without at the same time and as wholeheartedly accepting the theory of progress.

It is thus surprising to find a singular misapprehension on the part of Emile Rideau who on this question is among the few to realize the importance of Teilhard's insistence on progress and to recognize that what Teilhard actually did was a "phenomenology of history."[52] On progress, Rideau has this to say:

> The Progress of History? The Teilhardian concept of history is founded on the principle, if not of a biological, at least of a moral and spiritual progress of Mankind. . . . We must point out also the

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[52] "This phenomenology of history, extremely simple in style and outline, represents the dominating thought or the heart of Teilhard's thought" (Rideau, p. 118).

> weakness of an insistent argument which, emphasizing the value of the present signs of human progress, seems to be based on them so as to extrapolate the marks of the ascent of history toward a communion of persons.[53]

But Rideau continues:

> The permanence of evil does not permit us to argue reasonably, after the facts, for a better future; and the christian who, better than any other, knows the depth of sin, hesitates to conceive the possibility of a reduction or progressive destruction of selfishness. . . . He cannot but consider man and society in their structural frame as fundamentally fragmented; and it is always from the depths of the abyss, in the extremity of anguish, that springs the call of mankind toward God. Such has man been always, such is the truth of man.[54]

We may pass over the final remark as being far too provocative for comment. Nevertheless, when Rideau passes on later to affirm that a progress view of history is indeed nothing but a "rational idea," a "myth of reason," with whose imagery "the real history of souls on the way of spiritual convergence does not coincide" and then condescendingly remarks that an "optimist option" is "permissible and useful,"[55] we are constrained to make a rather vehement protest.

Rideau's objection is based primarily on the existence of evil--physical and moral. But that this objection should persist even after a study of the

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[53] _Ibid._, p. 351. [54] _Ibid._, p. 352.

[55] _Ibid._, p. 353.

Teilhardian concept of evil shows that the concept of evolutive evil and the necessity of sin had never been fully accepted or understood. Teilhard realized this and recognized in the problem the underlying reason for the actual weakness of christianity: "Christianity will not discover its power of contagion until, finally rejecting the last traces of Manichaeism and Platonism, it puts itself to thinking of original sin in terms not of the fall, but of progress."[56] Only when evil can be recognized and accepted as the necessary negative face of what is essentially a positive movement of pleromization does progress make real sense and cease to be a mere personal option or a "myth of reason."

Far from being more difficult for the christian, the concept of free and collective progress weighs more heavily upon him and can be seen more clearly. For

> without the process of biological evolution, which produced the human brain, there would be no sanctified souls; and similarly, without the evolution of collective thought, through which alone the plenitude of human consciousness can be attained on earth, how can there be a consummated Christ? In other words, without the constant striving of every human cell to unite with all the others, would the

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[56] "Mal évolutive et péché original." "From century to century, man develops a certain Weltanschauung (as additive and irreversible as any evolution) of planetary dimension and urgency; and this Weltanschauung [sic] is not purely 'rational coherence'; it implies 'passion' and 'faith'" (Letter to Rideau, 13 June 1953.

Parousia be physically possible? I doubt it.[57] Rideau forgets that for the christian evolutionist there no longer exist any barriers between the profane and the sacred. The christian evolutionist does not adore the world as his materialist, deterministic forebears were tempted to do; nor does he turn his back on the world as his religious ancestors and even his contemporaries often are wont. Rather he adores what is greater than the world, through the world. "Not the proud and cold Titan, but Jacob passionately doing battle with God."[58]

The idea of progress, then, affirms Teilhard, is an eminently christian view and at the same time an eminently scientific one, acceptable to all moderns alike.[59] But it is particularly on the side of Catholic theologians that there is a reluctance to accept this basic harmony. Christopher Mooney, for example, in an essentially perceptive volume,[60] again and again makes subtle reservations which have for effect a diminution of the full impact of the Teilhardian message.

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[57] OE, V, 34-35 (FM, p. 22).

[58] OE, VI, 223.

[59] So closely allied are the concepts of progress and the Parousia that one needs the other--and with a real, radical and exclusive need. "We must take up again, on a sounder scientific basis and as a more exact philosophical concept, the idea (or if you prefer it, the 'myth') of progress, this is the essential setting in which I see the simultaneous renaissance of both humanity and christianity" (Letter to Max Begouen, 12 January 1941).

[60] Christopher Mooney, Teilhard de Chardin and the Mystery of Christ (New York: Harper, 1966).

Mooney recognizes that Teilhard was attempting "to sketch out in broad outlines a set of universal laws for human progress and to explain how these laws find their full realization in Christ."[61] But he holds with von Balthasar and others that this is a theological judgment, not a judgment on actual conditions in the world where evil and suffering make things look different. Says Mooney,

> On this level of immediate experience, then, the Christian tends to have far less intellectual assurance that he can discover those universal laws which govern humanity's movement towards the final Pleroma of Christ. Such laws exist in fact and must exist, for the order of creation and the order of salvation are one and the same in the mind of God. Yet man must be on his guard not to invade this divine sphere too rashly, for his proper attitude in this area is not one of curiosity but of reverence, hesitation and awe. A theology of history such as Teilhard wishes to construct must therefore beware of a facile identification of man's knowable future on earth with that ultimate movement of mankind towards a destiny revealed in Christ. Faith tells us of God's total plan for the human race, but it says nothing about the concrete future of the world.[62]

Again Mooney warns,

> In the life of the individual Christian as well as in the life of the Church as a whole there is an immediate and transcendent relationship to the Person of Christ which is independent of all human progress and which cannot be reduced to any mere human energy. Teilhard's desire to give a sacred

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[61] Ibid., p. 204. [62] Ibid., pp. 244-64.

> character to all things profane without exception is a natural expression of his own mystical bent, as well as an understandable reaction against the severe dichotomy he encountered between sacred and profane in the lives of many Christians. Yet such a desire also involves risk, since its instinctive tendency is to suppress altogether a distinction which must never be too far from the Christian consciousness.[63]

Mooney's desire to save this distinction urges him to make the following notations:

> We have already noted earlier . . . Teilhard's conviction that the coming of the Parousia is conditioned by the planetary maturation of mankind. This condition is physically necessary but not sufficient, as Teilhard points out again and again, and by this distinction he means that the Parousia, while remaining a gratuitous intervention of God, is not an arbitrary event but is connected somehow with man's cooperation in bringing the evolutionary movement to its term of growth. What must now be emphasized is that this term of growth in Teilhard's system is not a state which humanity reaches before the Parousia, but a critical point coinciding with the Parousia. In other words, for Teilhard the "human point of planetary maturation" takes place not within history but at its end.[64]

Mooney's content is, I believe, essentially correct. But it is his mode of expression and precisely his emphasis which betrays the Teilhardian vision. For Mooney, as well as others, is a professional theologian, and professional theologian Teilhard was not.[65] Just as philosophers will find a number of difficulties in the theory of creative union, if it is extracted from the corpus of Teilhard's achievement.

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[63] Ibid., p. 209. [64] Ibid., p. 181.

[65] Which does not say, however, that Teilhard suffered from a lack of theological training (Cf. Cuenot, pp. 12 ff.).

In regard to the theological content, Mooney, I would guess, correctly suspects and understands what Teilhard was trying to do but reacts against it. Thus the christian who has "less assurance" of the laws of human progress is precisely that kind of christian who does not see the harmony in the universe, whose goal is not the union of visions--as was the goal of Teilhard. Finally, while it is true that Teilhard takes many risks, it seems to be his commentators who have fear of those risks, and not Teilhard himself.[66]

Mooney's emphasis on the distinction between the sacred and the profane (a distinction--not a barrier--which actually exists and which Teilhard did not deny) is contrary to Teilhard's spirit and manifests a basic misunderstanding of the incarnation itself. Says Teilhard, "From before the realized Incarnation (by virtue of a mysterious but revealed pre-action of the Humanity of Jesus) all the history of the world is that of the progressive impregnation of the Universe by Christ."[67] And again, "Religion, like Science or Civilization, has, one might say, an Ontogenesis coextensive with the History of Humanity."[68] An insistence on what separates religion and humanity, theology and history, faith and science is far from Teilhard's mind. But, the theologians will argue, such an accentuation corresponds to the actual discontinuity. No, says Teilhard; it takes on an importance only for those who do not know how to see. True, there is a distinction of sciences: theology is surely not history; nor is mathematics literature, nor is man God nor God man. But the continuity is far more important than the discontinuity.

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[66] Teilhard himself once remarked that one must even risk one's "orthodoxy" to arrive at the truth.

[67] ETG, p. 399.

> True enough, my taste for the earth is strange, and, at first sight, almost anti-Christian. But it's precisely because I feel so intensely this basic thing in the pagan soul that I feel in a stronger position to speak advisedly (on equal terms) with those who worship the universe,--more certain, too, of the inter-relations and quasi-reconciliations possible between two passions I really believe to be to some degree united in me, and which in any case I certainly experience--a passion for the world, and a passion for God. What I appreciate in the earth is obviously not its lower part, now outstripped and decrepit (although an instinctive charm still leaves in our hearts a certain weakness--isn't that so--for the age-old abode of the past, for "the first earth and the first clay"). What attracts me isn't even the myriads of non-human existences that surround our monad but have no future, that are becoming further and further removed from us and so cease to be interesting.
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> For me the real earth is that chosen part of the universe, still almost universally dispersed and in course of gradual segregation, but which is little by little taking on body and form in Christ. In my

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[68] *OE*, IX, 143.

mind I clothe this earth with all that makes up the beauty and solidity of the real and tangible universe--rich, concrete vitality--a precious future with which all our efforts and our industry cooperate, an intimate bond of union in matter and in the transformation that makes us evolve as one being, a destiny that is not artificially imposed but organically based on our capabilities and built up by our effort plus the help of God. You're right in saying that our creation suffers from a discord that apparently dooms to failure all these efforts to find a term to evolution along the actual line of "becoming" that now opens before us. It seems that the mind cannot free itself except by some clean break, some escape, *of a completely different order* from the slow organization of matter that led up to the elaboration of the brain. In this sense there is indeed a discontinuity between heaven and earth. (That's where death comes in.) But the continuity persists in the impulse, the vital effort, the *spirit* in which the work of beatification is embraced and forwarded. To this task of sanctification we have to bring all the spirit that has instinctively animated and still irresistibly raises all terrestrial life. We have to transfer to heaven all our zest for earth. Dynamic unity exists along this fundamental axis of aspiration and drive: if we place ourselves there we can make directly for God *without leaving the line* of all truly natural effort, the line that runs through the aspiration immanent in the whole of our cosmos. I don't think that transformation of organs holds out any hope to us, in fact, of any appreciable development of psychisms in the future. What advance could there be upon thought? As I was saying, the liberation of matter is an extra- transformist phenomenon, which belongs more to idealist philosophy than to a scientific examination of things. True progress, heir of the vital impulse, seems indeed to be confined to *moral* organization, by which the conscious soul surrenders itself docilely to the duty, inherent in its constitution, of extending, freely (and to some degree blindly, it must be admitted) the evolutionary work from which it recognizes its own emergence and which must be good. What natural organic connection is there between this obedience, this humble fidelity, and the fulfillment of the monad that in the end finds itself ready to pass into God through Christ? That secret is beyond us, even though we can, maybe,

> discover some things that are consonant with it, some probabilities. The moralization and sanctification of the Universe are the real progress, the real extension of the work which produced the brain and thought. It is this that should be emphasized, by insisting that neither moralization nor sanctification are a break, but a purification, careful as they must be to reject no fragment of the legitimate human effort and never to forget the fundamental unity of all the particles of our creation.[69]

In this perspective, then, we see that the proper accent is not upon discontinuity between heaven and earth, between the Parousia and human maturation, and finally between nature and grace, but upon the continuity which is far more important and which alone can make these concepts fecund for human action. The desire of some critics, expecially those of Catholic theologians, to safeguard the distinctions between human effort and divine grace, to de-emphasize the "super-human" possibilities of man as much as possible, or to place them "outside" of history (and here it is a matter, perhaps, of mere semantics; what is the meaning of history)--these criticisms demonstrate the inability of thinkers to get beyond their narrow epistemological compartments. If one is not convinced of the essential existence of Progress in history and in the universe, difficulties will never cease to pose themselves, and, if not destroy the Teilhardian vision, will diminish it, water it down, and make it ineffective.

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[69] Genèse, pp. 213-15.

Progress and Cyclicism

The Teilhardian vision of progress, then, describes the movement of the universe towards its end: a final moment of choice before ultimate union with the divine, the Christ-Omega. It was on these grounds that the classic philosophers of history were most severely criticized by Teilhard. There is clearly no sympathy between Teilhard and the cyclicists.[70] Teilhard himself declares:

> All the same I was unable to refrain from a brief protest against the barren cyclicism in which not only the geologists but also the theorists of human history, from Spengler to Toynbee try to enclose us. In the universe, it is the drifts which are important, not only the rhythms. Only the drifts are much slower than the rhythms, and so much more difficult to separate.[71]

As Cuenot points out, Teilhard did not deny certain rhythms in the history of the globe--which might tend to justify a kind of cyclic conception of time. Rather Teilhard saw things on a grander scale. It is like looking at a tapestry from the wrong side, where one sees only disorder and chaos. But seen on the right side and from afar, everything becomes harmonious--everything and everywhere is progress.[72]

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[70] "Every effort of Teilhardian science and philosophy is a reaction against the Aristotelian conception of cyclic time, strictly subordinating the waves to the tide, and the oscillations to the orthogenetic drift" (Cuenot, pp. 344-45).

[71] Letter of 31 January 1953 cited by Cuenot, p. 345.

Despite the fact that the modern cyclicists, especially Spengler, borrow their analogy of origin, growth and decline of civilizations from biology, it is a borrowing without change, without the proper modifications necessarily specific to the hominization of evolution. For Spengler, there is a great difference between "nature" and "history," the one for all intents and purposes being equated with physics-chemistry, and the second with biology. This distinction is certainly to Spengler's credit, for he clearly recognized Newton's mistake and that of the generations which followed him in seeking out mathematical laws which could guide the history of man. But Spengler failed to see that cosmogenesis reached a new phase in the coming of man whereby the evolutionary, biological mechanism became hominized, rationalized. Thus for him the decline of the West was inevitable, as inevitable as the death of some great plant, exhausted of its energies, sapped of its strength, gradually withering away to be replaced by young and vigorous saplings.

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[72] Cf. Cuenot, p. 157; ETG, p. 322.

Teilhard too begins with a biological point of origin, but he does not rest simply on the biological level. Instead he sees evolution as projecting itself from the purely biological to the human, so that human history and human progress is a prolongation of the ancient mechanism which gave birth to atoms, life, and then mind itself.[73]

In a sense the cyclicists are therefore correct when they perceive a kind of periodic renewal. On an inferior level and viewed from very close, such an interpretation of human history is possible. But it is not an adequate interpretation; it is too narrow and does not take into account the other vast reaches of human knowledge. On a higher and broader level, human history must be seen as progressive: each war, each revolution, each scientific or religious advance is another step in that unification of mankind, following the law of complexity/consciousness and culminating in convergence with Omega. Human history is thus pleromization rather than cyclicism.[74]

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[73] "Spengler and Toynbee have brought to modern historiography a liking for the use of images borrowed from biological life . . . to describe the origin, apogee and decline of civilization. For the historiographers, these are but metaphors which do not really effect any ontological bridge between biology and history. But Teilhard thinks that, in actual fact, human civilization is nothing but the prolongation of the old dynamism of evolution in the animate sphere, on a higher plane, that of the humanly conscious and psychic" (Smulders, The Design of Teilhard de Chardin, p. 104).

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[74] There is ample evidence in the *Notes de lectures* that Teilhard had a special interest in the philosophers of history. These include Arnold J. Toynbee, both in his *Christianity and Civilization* and *A Study of History*; Oswald Spengler's *Man and Technics*; Condorcet's *Prospectus d'un tableau historique du progrès de l'esprit humain*; Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* (in French translation); Nietzsche's *Le bon savour* and *Aurore*; Ernst Troeltsch's *Christian Thought*; Seidenberg's *Post-Historic Man*. References to Toynbee are relatively abundant. Teilhard's principal criticism of Toynbee is the latter's solution to the continuation of human progress: a return to God through a transformation of the four great higher religions into a religion of mankind. For Teilhard, this is human progress, "by addition" (*par surcroît*) to which he opposed human progress by "co-condition" or "co-end" (*co-condition*, *co-fin*). Toynbee has not seen the "forward" movement of humanity, that is the personalization process through totalization. Hence Toynbee's fears that totalization or the "social progress of Leviathan" will oppose the spiritual progress of the individual. Such an attitude, shared by many christians, is rooted in an inadequate view of original sin which limits the possibilities of human evolution (cf. *Notes de lectures*, December, 1947, March, 1948, April, 1948). The rest of Teilhard's criticisms will be obvious. Instead of Toynbee's post-Christian era, Teilhard substitutes a trans-Christian era (cf. *Notes de lectures*, October 1954); in place of Toynbee's single religion, Teilhard places a single *Weltanschauung* (cf. *ibid*.).

Of special interest to Teilhard was Cournot's *Considerations sur la marche des idées et des evenements des temps modernes* (Paris: Brivin, 1872), a work more properly associated in America with sociology as is Cournot himself. Cournot, as many others, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, became aware of the fecundity of looking at history in terms of organic biology. But he failed to allow for the organic in the spiritual and the psychic. Thus, what was truly human escapes the evolutionary organic movement.. Nevertheless, the abundant notes taken by Teilhard on Cournot shows that there were many points of agreement. Two examples from Cournot will show this to be true. In commenting

Yet to say that Teilhard preferred the progress school to the cyclic school is not to say that he took up sides completely with the progressists. With all of them, christian, marxist, and secular humanist alike, he agreed that human history is the story of the advance of man. But with each of them Teilhard had a certain point of disagreement. With Bossuet it was his non-evolutionary stand, a view which finally led to the complete alienation of men of the church and men of science as the one refused to see a world in movement and the other

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on Bossuet, Cournot felt that the Bishop of Meaux had the power to be a real reformer and was actually the last Father of the Church. But, "the more one looks at him from close, the more one is convinced that Bossuet, so admired and with reason by his contemporaries and by posterity, did not effectively exercise his power neither of a reformer nor of a restorer. His eyes turned to the past, closed on a future so near, he traced the plans of a grandiose piece of architecture which remained only on paper. Suppress Bossuet and there would be less magnificence of the human spirit, but the history of Catholicism would not be noticeably changed" (Cournot, I, 192-93). These words were noted by Teilhard and no doubt with a great deal of agreement for they show that Bossuet's greatest lack was an appreciation for an ever larger future. Again, Cournot notes in his second volume that the true prolongation of natural history through human history is not through men, but through human societies, that is through humanity (Cournot, II, 220). Again, annotated by Teilhard, the quotation demonstrates another point of similarity.

We have had occasion to demonstrate earlier, in dealing with the idea of progress, what Teilhard's criticisms of Condorcet would be: rightly suspecting the existence of a real progress but not sufficiently aware of the grand evolutionary past of the cosmos, Condorcet's philosophy of history was needlessly naive, but understandably so.

the spiritual depth and meaning of the movement. For Bossuet and the men of his time, the world was in a kind of frame. The christian was to look at the universe, see that it was beautiful, and worship its creator for making something that was not absolutely necessary. There was to be a sort of intellectual reference of all objects to God. For Teilhard, such was the view not only of Bossuet, but of Ignatius, of the Imitation of Christ, and of most ascetic and spiritual writers, including the very great like Pascal.[75]

> Man is nothing else on the Earth but a witness or a guest, more or less attentive and interested. Pathetic example of individual genius stifled by the general spirit of his time.[76]

With Marx and Hegel, it was the overemphasis on the community with the loss of the individual, that is, a confusion between aggregation and true unification, which ultimately weakened these systems. With Neitzsche, it was the opposite; the overemphasis on the individual superman and the complete ignorance of community union.[77]

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[75] "Essai d'intégration de l'homme dans l'univers," 19 November 1930.

[76] "Le sens humain."

[77] Wildiers, pp. 66-67. Needless to say, complete monographs ought to be produced on each of these men and their intellectual relationship with Teilhard who was by no means an historian nor a philosopher of history (in the traditional sense) by profession. But he was aware of current schools of thought in the

Progress and the Kingdom of God

The alert christian of today will not deny the evolutionist view. He will in fact be in entire sympathy with it. But if he is also aware of traditional christian teaching he will wonder about the relation between evolution and the kingdom of God. And thus he reopens the Augustinian question of the City of God and the City of the Earth. What is the relationship between the two in the Teilhardian vision? That the question is of key importance is beyond a doubt. We can repeat with Wildiers:

> It is here that one finds the key to the secret of his spiritual adventure. His whole aspiration is expressed in these words: "To explicate the ties which genetically link up the Kingdom of God and human Effort."[78]

As de Lubac points out, natural progress, the moral engagement and the religious act are three distinct things and are not to be confused.[79] Yet Teilhard insists that, while distinct, they are clearly interrelated. The cohesion of the universe is not simply juxtaposition, it is a real organic unity. Thus "if Christ is universal

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philosophy of history since he felt himself to be doing the same thing, that is, constructing a view of the universe consistent with the given facts.

[78] Wildiers, p. 11.

[79] de Lubac, p. 289.

(that is, is consummated little by little from each creature) it follows that his Kingdom essentially goes beyond the domain of supernatural life strictly speaking."[80]

What is the nature of this "beyond" actually is difficult to identify. Smulders warns us that "it would be an error . . . to identify the progress of science, of technique, of organization, etc. with the realization of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is realized by the union in love of all men among each other in a common love for the Father."[81] But in this warning is contained also perhaps a hint of Teilhard's answer. For while the increased dominance over the world, natural progress, brings with it grave temptations to vanity and hubris, Teilhard would respond that the very same natural progress brings with it a new possibility to love more openly, more fully, more freely.[82] In fact, it seems that to be consistent in this realm of the relation of the Kingdom to natural progress, we are constrained to repeat what was already said in regard to the end of the world, namely, the natural base is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the supernatural explosion or the "eclair parousiaque."

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[80] OE, IX, 41.

[81] Smulders, p. 242.

[82] Here we might add as an interesting aside that on this level a case may be made for the agreement of Teilhard and Harvey Cox on the "celebration" of urban life and the freedom it can bring to modern man. Cf. Harvey Cox, The Secular City (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1965); Daniel Callahan (ed.), The Secular City Debate (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1966).

If Smulders is correct (and there is no reason to doubt it) that the Kingdom of God is a kingdom of love to be achieved by love, then the natural progress inherent in cosmogenesis is the necessary base for this kingdom. For we have seen that its basic energy is love, radial energy become hominized, and that its eventual goal is the union of all in the All by means of this love-energy. Thus the entire history of the cosmos is consummated in the Kingdom and it can be said, let us hope without fear of misunderstanding, that the "supernatural" kingdom has need of the "natural" progress of cosmogenesis. The truth is, however, that the distinctions expressed in this terminology demonstrate an insufficient absorption of the Teilhardian spirit. Better to express the liaison between God's kingdom and his creation in Teilhard's own words:

> From this point of view, the noospheric maturation (because linked to a dynamized form of "charity") would not be achieved without the animating action of the ever-growing Church at the heart of Humanity. Which is but to say (an eminently satisfying proposition) that it is on condition and by force of being christified from within that terrestrial Progress will arrive at the bursting point of the

"parousiac flash of lightning."[83]

Thus, "Heaven is not opposed to the Earth: but it is born of the conquest and the transformation of the Earth." And because no one has yet explained this, because there is no book which describes it--what need do we have of a book when a whole civilization tells us: "In our eyes, the history of the World is designed as a gesture charged with the absolute and the divine where the spiritualizing activity of beings is discovered as a sacred energy."[84]

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[83] "Trois choses que je vois," p. 12.

[84] "La route de l'ouest." From this perspective we may well question even an excellent commentator like Wildiers who agrees with Rabut that a correct attitude toward history is not necessarily a correct one vis-a-vis the Kingdom of God. It may be asked whether such an attitude is not directly rooted in the non-acceptance of the basic unity of cosmogenesis. Once such a unity is seen, it is difficult to understand how a basic error in the conception of history or in that of theology could be tolerated while still making a pretense at harmony. This is certainly not to say that all questions are immediately solved; but it is to affirm that underlying the divisions and distinctions--even epistemological--among the sciences, there is a fundamental unity. Out of the unity springs a harmonious vision of the world, a vision which is tolerant of mystery, distinction and varied approach, but not so of disharmony, disunion and a relativism leading to separation or scepticism. It would seem that much of the criticism directed against Teilhard is rooted in this very question and stems from the attempt of professionals in each intellectual discipline to save his discipline either from contamination by the others or diminution by the introduction of so-called "foreign" concepts. A false attitude indeed and one which fights a losing battle against the progressive unification of all knowledge. And an attitude which

The Meaning of Action

The Teilhardian acceptance of the idea of progress and his confrontation of theology with the contemporary fact of science aid us in solving the threefold dilemma which still rests in modern man. Expressed in a single question, man asks: what is the value of my actions here and now? The answer may be apparent: human action has an absolute value insofar as it is an extension of cosmic energy. Or, it is man who builds his history working with and through the divine action, that is, working toward a final communion with Omega who, as it were, has need of human maturation to complete his creation.

The question is threefold for it involves the value of the present, the action of God on the present, and finally the ultimate value of human action. The primitive christian community, by adopting a radically linear concept of time, was able to live a life in the present, delicately balanced between an immense respect

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marks especially theologians who feel themselves constrained to preserve the purity of a theological system which no longer speaks to modern man. In this regard Wildiers rightly comments that "the three principal exigencies which Teilhard poses to current theology [are]: loyalty before the results and perspectives of contemporary natural science, confrontation of the dogmas of christianity and the new perspectives of science, reflection on the religious value of human effort in the temporal domain" (Wildiers, pp. 88-89).

and realization of the value of the past, especially of those past events which were decisive in the history of the universe, and a profound expectation for the future which would bring about the culmination of all of the cosmos. We have seen too that this dynamic tension which enabled the early christians--for perhaps only a generation--to become convinced of the value of their actions, especially as a community, in the present, was eventually diminished or lost with the advance in time of the church of Christ, and the institutionalization of its activities. A renewal of this attitude has again come to light in our own day, nourished not by the parousiac hope but by the possibilities of a better world offered through science and technics. But the modern vision is clouded by the pessimistic cyclicism of a Spengler and the cynicism and scepticisms of the existentialists. In a sense, modern man is placed in exactly the same position as the primitive christians, for they too were surrounded by archaic cyclicisms. What does Teilhard de Chardin have to offer in this regard? Can he aid in giving new value to the present moment?

Another glance at the cosmogenetic perspective provides an answer. In man, evolution has become conscious of itself; it is hominized. This is nothing more than to say that it is man who controls its direction.

We have some general ideas of where evolution can go, if we so choose: toward further unification in socialization and totalization, and then final communion at a point of ecstasy with the summit, alpha and omega, of the universe-in-progress. But because we exist, because evolution has passed the threshold from simple life to reflective life, this progress can only be achieved through the actions of man. It is no longer automatic, no longer instinctive. Instead, it becomes intelligent. Between the push of lower, infra-human levels, and the pull of Omega, lies the present: the moment of choice and of action. Clearly it is this moment which has most importance for us. The past can teach us the directions of the future; and the future can direct us, that is, direct us in our actions of today. But only if we make the decisions now, only if we immerse ourselves in the now will the future be realized.

This value to the attachment of the now is not that of the aesthetes who see importance only in the present.[85] Rather the present takes on the aspect of a kind of effervescence or shimmering luminescence--a tension of activity caught between the dynamic emergies of a past already accomplished and a future not yet fulfilled. The present has no meaning in itself; but it takes on capital importance as it is seen hanging balanced between the past and the future. Only in a static world does the present moment enjoy a status independent of what has come before and what will succeed it. In a world-in-progress the present has a meaning in relation to the before and after. The present can be seen as the taut rope stretched between two poles. Each gesture made by the tight-rope walker has an importance far beyond any step taken on the ground. And the resiliency and temperament of the rope depends in large part upon its supports--ahead and behind.

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[85] Cf. "Sur le bonheur" and Teilhard's comments on Gide.

Teilhard thus respects the linear conception of time introduced in the judaeo-christian tradition, and, as Cullman suggests in regard to the primitive christians, by respecting the threefold division of time into past, present, and future, Teilhard achieved a full understanding and gave full value to the present moment. The modern christian then need not feel remorse or guilt by immersing himself in the now so as to build the future, to construct the universe. Nor need he worry that his actions have no ultimate meaning. As a being immersed in time, he can only achieve his culmination through time and through respect for time.

What of God's action in time? What of Providence?

On this question, I think Teilhard rests very close to the position taken by Vico. For he is constrained on the one side to affirm the real value of human acts and at the same time the action of God on the human level. It is of course the ancient problem of human freedom and determinism. And just as the Teilhardian thrust can be summarized as the effort to solve the problem of the one and the many, so too can we say that he attempts to solve the ultimate problem of human freedom, which is but another face of the one-many question. Wildiers remarks:

> This problem of the rapport between God and the World was for him much more than a purely abstract and theoretic problem upon which one could peaceably comment during academic meetings or in arid treatises. This question of the rapport between the historic and the transcendent constituted for him as for Hegel a really existential problem in which he was engaged with all his being as if it were a question of his existence as a man and as a christian. The proposed solutions are moreover more the result of a personal and subjective experience than a purely scientific investigation.[86]

A full treatment of this question is, of course, impossible here. But we can affirm with confidence that Teilhard saw with clarity the necessity for revelation. Between persons there is necessarily communication; the one is impossible without the other. The divine action in the world at the time of the incarnation and the redemption was but an extension, an explication, another facet of the divine action in creation. Once Christ is established at the heart of humanity-in-progress, cosmogenesis is recognized as christogenesis. Because of the incarnation, the otherwise bothersome and always difficult distinction between natural and supernatural, if not disappears, becomes more understandable.

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[86] Wildiers, p. 12.

> "Supernatural" . . . can signify only "supremely real," that is, supremely conforming to the conditions of reality imposed upon beings by Nature. In order to be able to be the Savior and the Life of souls in their supernatural prolongations, the Christ ought then firstly satisfy certain conditions vis-a-vis the World taken in its experimental and natural reality. . . . In other words, the Christ has need of finding the Summit of the World for his consummation as he had need of finding a Woman for his conception.[87]

Thus the coincidence of the natural and the supernatural and the solution of the question of Providence appear to be falsely stated. Only in a static universe can there be a question of an arbitrary interference on the part of God in the natural manifestations of the universe. In a cosmogenetic universe, or better, in a christogenetic universe, everything appears "supernaturalized."[88] After the redemption and in the era of grace, what is real takes on the double face of natural and supernatural. However, such formulations can hardly be satisfactory to a Teilhardian for they are clothed in an awkward and outdated vocabulary the use of which tends to complicate the issue rather than resolve it. Furthermore, it skirts the problematic of human liberty, that is, whether or not man makes his own history or whether, in acting through history, man follows the hidden designs of God, a theory so well expressed by Bossuet.

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[87] "Comment je crois," pp. 19-20.

[88] As is often stated in traditional Roman Catholic theology: after the redemption and in the era of grace, all is supernaturalized.

A better answer can be found again through the theory of creative union. The universe is defined as the gradual unification of individual particles midway between the horizontal axis of increasing consciousness and the vertical axis of increasing complexity. Until midpoint n of this vector, evolution moves by instinct, blindly, as it were, toward ever more improbable forms, defying the law of entropy and finally erupting into reflective life. At point n (reflection) the onward movement becomes radically interiorized and, in effect, self-evolving as the interior radial energy, in the form of human love, dominates over tangential, more exteriorized forms of energy. From point n, the forward thrust can only be sustained by free choice, which is the essence of love. We have already seen that this theory requires the existence of an ultimate threshold: an attractive force which keeps the flame of love alive. As unification advances and the boiling point of the human molecules is approached, humanity prepares itself for the ultimate paroxysm, the ultimate moment of free choise: whether to opt for unity and communion with the All (Omega) or to plunge back downward into multiplicity and nothingness. This final point of human maturation will coincide with the second coming of the Christ (which in apocalyptic terms is identified with the last judgment) and a new stage in history: final communion in the divine.

In this view, it can be seen that if one speaks of a providential "design" in history, one is speaking of the total design of the cosmos, a scene in which man occupies the latest portion, and perhaps the most interesting portion, for his script is not yet written and he is free to choose his own particular patterns. His freedom is however limited in this sense that if he wills that cosmogenesis reach its "natural" culmination, the Pleroma, he cannot will his own destruction.[89] Therefore, his single moral rule: progress, "to try everything, until the end."[90]

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[89] Cf. de Lubac, p. 187.

This brings us to the third prong of the meaning of action: What is man to do? Teilhard's basic moral principle, "tout essayer, jusqu'au bout" is based essentially upon what he calls the "principle of the maximum." This principle simply means that, of organic and metaphysical necessity, the world cannot be inferior to the furthest needs of our reason and our heart. Or, what our reason and heart essentially and positively need to be satisfied, the world possesses. And in still another way, the most intelligible and most active is necessarily the most real and the most true.[91] This means that there is no ontological disequilibrium in the world between our capacity of desiring and acting and the real itself. The real is thus not an arbitrary value; its value is in proportion to our ambitions. If we move to the very profoundest levels of our being we know that to continue our energy, to continue in our very taste for life, it is required that the world be and remain open ("a reservoir of discoveries"), irreversible (man need never have to redescend to a previous level, once arrived at a higher one), and it ought to contain and prepare something unique and indispensable for its plenitude (there ought to be an absolute).

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[90] OE, VI, 158: ". . . the physico-moral obeys in its exercise, a double essential and universal law: to try all--to the very end."

[91] OE, IX, 222.

Now the consequences of the Principle of the Maximum are pregnant with meaning, especially in the realm of morality. Any morality, any philosophy and theology is suspect which places our powers of discovery in an enclosure. In the old way of thinking ("paleo-christian"), morality, problem of action, was outside of nature. It was conceived as a system of laws and rights, a limitation of energy, of force. This is true if the world is conceived as a sort of absolute term. Yet the basic problem of morality is not to limit force, but to guide persons toward achievements by the use of force (or energy). The moralist today ought no more to be a jurist or equilibrist; he is the technician and engineer of the spiritual energies of the world. Thus three basic moral principles can be entertained as the basis for a new morality: (1) "Nothing is finally good except that which coincides with the growth of mind on the Earth. (2) All that is good (at least fundamentally and partially) which procures a spiritual growth on Earth. (3) Finally, that is better which assures its highest development to the spiritual powers of the Earth."[92]

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[92] OE, VI, 133.

In short, "to limit force (if it is not by so doing to obtain even greater force), that is sin."[93]

Teilhard's theory of action and the morality which stems from it reinvigorates the christian soul which perhaps was stifled by a teaching de-emphasizing material action and viewing the world as a vale of tears, the sooner left behind or ignored the better. In fact the very opposite is true. The christian cannot find his salvation but through the world, through matter. His attempts at escape place him in the camp of the Orientals and within the purview of cyclic time or with the aesthetes, the pleasure seekers who see reality present merely in the single instant. Or again he might find himself with the existentialists who are overwhelmed rather than moved to conquest by the very human realization of anguish, the forces of nothingness (multiplicity), and the absurdity of a world without a goal. For the true humanist, open to all the reality about him if he knows how to see, there is a new and exhilarating morality which frees him for the conquest which is his right.[94]

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[93] OE, VI, 134. The French word force of course means strength, power, force. Teilhard evidently does not mean coercion but rather energy, thrust, drive, power. Cf. also Teilhard's article "La moral peut-elle se passer de soubassement métaphysiques avoués ou inavoués," 23 April 1945.

The moving force behind human action is not to be searched for hither and thither. It is nothing more than the most profound of human energies: love.

> Because we love, and in order that we may love even more, we find ourselves happily and especially compelled to participate in all the endeavors, all the anxieties, all the aspirations and also all the affections of the earth--insofar as these embody a principle of ascension and synthesis.[95]

Love and the obligations which it entails demand a deep attachment (in the first moment of a dialectic of synthesis) to the world and to matter. In this regard Teilhard penned some of his most beautiful and already most famous lines:

> To the measure of my powers, because I am a priest, I wish from now on to be the first to be conscious of what the World loves, pursues, suffers; the first to search, to sympathize, to grieve; the first to blossom and to be sacrificed, more widely human, and more fully terrestrial than any servant of the World. I wish . . . to plunge into Things. . . .[96]

In the "L'evolution de la chasteté," Teilhard reached heights of lyricism matched perhaps only by the Divine Milieu and in the Hymn of the Universe:

A noble passion gives wings. . . .

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[94] Teilhard sympathized, for example, with an intellect like Bossuet and Pascal. Cf. "Le sens humain," 12 February 1929.

[95] FM, p. 95.

[96] ETG, p. 301.

> Love is the threshold of another universe. . . .
> Some day, after the ether, the winds, the tides, gravitation, we will capture, for God, the energies of love. And then, for the second time in the history of the World, Man will have discovered Fire.[97]

Speaking of his own personal rule of morality, he wrote

> I no longer have any other personal line of conduct myself than this one: "believe in the Spirit," the Spirit, supreme value and criterion of things; Spirit, living and loving organizer of the World. Confide yourself to a World animated by our Lord and the World will save you. I think that, as in the Gospel, the moving waters carry us insofar as we dare to walk on them, provided that it be in the direction and in the love of God. Walk straight ahead, without hesitating, and you will see that, mile after mile, the fog will disappear.[98]

> I can't believe that the world was given to man simply to _keep him busy_, as if it were a wheel to turn. There must be a precise effort to be made, a definitive result to be obtained, and thus must be the _axis_ of human work and of the human lineage, serving as the _support_ or matter of our fidelity to God, acting as the _dynamic bond_ of our charity.[99]

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[97] "L'evolution de la chastété," February 1934.

[98] Letters to Léontine Zanta, pp. 89-90.

[99] _Genèse_, p. 181.

CONCLUSION

If among the primary questions in society there has always been one concerning the nature and direction of man, only in our time has the anthropological question become of primary importance. This modern concern of man for man is the extraordinarily exhilarating effect of the liberating movement of modern science. Beginning with Brahe, Kepler, and Copernicus, and ending in the giant discoveries of Freud, man has been enabled to drop the chains of false and inadequate astronomical, biological and psychological knowledge and has thus gained in nobility. Once convinced that the earth was not a universal center, man could still find comfort in his belief that, after all, he did crown a vastly inferior animal kingdom. But with Darwin, that too changed as man gradually came to accept his biological origin common with other forms. Man then gloried in his freedom, until Freud showed that much of this freedom is mythological and that the forces of the unknown and the unconscious are far greater and more determining than anyone could have imagined. In three great blows, man lost most of his mystery. But in so doing, he gained in stature, and the full impact of Pascal's "thinking reed" came now to bear upon the minds of men.

For as improbable as man is, he exists. And more significant still, he advances. And the nobility of man rests not so much on who he is or is not, nor from whence he came. His nobility lies in this that he can move forward. The truly great apprehension of the twentieth century is the recognition of man's ability to build his own future. The anthropological question thus posed in our time is no longer metaphysical, no longer biological, nor psychological. It is historical: Where are we going?

At first glance, the major anthropological question seems today what it has been since the very appearance of man on earth: mere survival. If man is today not disquieted by the "bomb" because he is beginning to learn how to live in an age of continuing crisis of annihilation, he is more than a little disturbed by the problem of overpopulation. As we see more and more men, pushing closer and closer together, an endless stream of problems follows: neuroses, insecurities, complications. The effect is a feeling of suffocation: there are simply too many men and not enough space, not enough food, not enough facilities. It is all well to talk of man and his progress in terms of individuals or even of nations, but when men swarm over the planet with no sign of a decrease in their numbers but only a fantastic acceleration in sight, then progress takes on a kind of macabre, ironic tone. As if the dream exists to make the reality more painful.

But with a different perspective, these vast human hordes can take on a positive look. With the recognition that true human progress lies not within the individual but along the central axis of evolution, a value can be discerned beneath what hitherto seemed to be a threatening doom. For as the pressure of men one upon the other increases, so will their awareness of each other and their realization that any step forward must be a step in common. Either all move together, or no one moves at all. The forward motion can come only from an intensification of consciousness which is achieved by human convergence. As the network of human consciousness covers the globe more and more densely, the possibilities of interaction, of a common "conspiration" become more and more available, and more and more probable. Thus in spite of man's demystification and his existence in a numerical horde, his nobility is augmented as his true value emerges.

One of Teilhard's most compelling essays, "Some Reflections on the Spiritual Repercussions of the Atomic

Bomb,"[1] describes the new sense of power which comes with man's realization of his own magnitude. It is, in a way, the same sense felt by paleolithic man before the first fire or in neolithic times before a field of growing rice, millet or corn. And so in modern times, with steam and electricity. The great difference is that now we suddenly become aware that man no longer is compelled to serve matter, but that he takes control over the very genesis of this matter. And he rightly feels exalted--more so than at any time since his birth. But man realizes as well that this newly found power does not arise from his individual actions. Rather it is the fruit of the cooperation of hundreds and thousands for a single product. And if man learns the lesson, it is that this process can continue, that this power can be had only in cooperation with others. Man's work now lies on a planetary scale.

Thus man's true power, his true value, lies in his associative power, his sociability. This fact is surely not surprising in a convergent universe, the continued existence of which depends on the elements' capabilities of uniting for further effectiveness. It is in this perspective, then, that both Teilhard and the neohumanists stress the modern age, not as the age of the machine or of industry, but rather the Age of Research. In research is found, indeed, that work which most characterizes twentieth-century man, that work which alone can insure the continued progress of the universe. Not singly, but in groups, will discoveries be made, inventions processed, and progress achieved. And not, again, in a haphazard fashion, but in carefully planned and controlled environments, with a view in mind to building man's future.

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[1] OE, VI, 77-87.

Human happiness is thus to be found in conquest, conquest of the earth and of the future, by and for man. While couched in a language unfamiliar to dogmatic christianity or traditional religious terminology, this human goal is not unworthy of coinciding with the great ends laid out by religious thinkers and mystics: union with God. For we have seen that the two, union with God and human maturation, are necessarily linked and that there is every reason to believe in a point of coincidence of the Parousia and the human attainment of Omega. On the one hand, the means for the attainment of mystic union is to be found in adoration. On the other, human achievement, accomplishment, completion is to be attained by research. But, as so many dualisms, the adoration-research dualism is dissolved into a single movement in the perspective of evolutionary convergence. "Research, Work, Adoration"[2] are but different names for the same thrust: the preparation of the earth for the second coming, the prolongation of evolutionary forces, the building of the future.

> And so it is that the more I tried to extend to and to guess the future of the advance of this immense physico-psychic spiral where I found myself engaged by history, the more did that which we still call too simply "research" become charged, colored and warmed by certain powers (Faith, Adoration) until now regarded as foreign to science.[3]

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[2] Cf. "Recherche, travail et adoration," March 1955; OE, IX, 281-89.

[3] OE, V, 163 (FM, p. 128).

EPILOGUE

If this study carries any message it should be this: "Let us go on, life is still beautiful." It makes no pretenses at having exhausted the thought of Teilhard and its impact on the philosophy of history. Future monographs and theses can investigate at greater length and in more profundity such ideas as the Teilhardian view of progress, time, action, and other topics. There could also be comparative works on each of the great philosophers of history and Teilhard. Such tasks are necessary, I believe, if modern intellectuals are not to wallow about in vague and amorphous platitudes or to resist the evidences which science presents to them daily. This is all the more necessary if we are to finally emerge from the sadness and uncertainty which engulfs us at the present moment. This sadness is the result of the incompleteness we sense about us, an incompleteness which could be intellectually fulfilled for some by the adoption of the christogenetic view. Life can appear beautiful again if one walks toward the future. "I will go toward the future stronger than my double faith as a man and as a christian. For I have perceived from the top of the mountain the Promised Land."

Paris, March 1967

Webster Groves, April 1968

GLOSSARY

Amorization: that process by which intelligent beings are mutually attracted; the process of informing the universe with love.

Anthropogenesis: the evolution or development of man.

Biosphere: the film of organic substances which envelops the earth.

Center: the organizing nucleus of any complex.

Complexity: a phenomenon whose property is to organize about a center a certain fixed number of elements in a closed ensemble with a determined radius: for example, atoms, cells, metazoa, etc.

Complexity/Consciousness: a scientific law which states that the complexifying process of the universe is in relation with its growth in consciousness.

Consciousness: spontaneity, the within, reflection, intelligence, freedom.

Energy, radial: that manifestation of universal force which unites complexities center to center.

Energy, tangential: that manifestation of universal force which unites complexities by reason of some exteriority.

Entropy: a scientific law which expresses the irreversible degradation of energy.

Hominization: the evolutive process which results in the human species; the process of humanizing the universe; the rationalization of nature.

Noosphere: the whole complex of thinking beings and their thoughts which envelops the earth.

Orthogenesis: a scientific hypothesis which holds that the stuff of the universe evolves toward the more complex and the more interiorized.

Pantheism: belief in the union of the human and the divine.

Parousia: the second coming of Christ; the consummation of the world.

Planetization: the extension of the thinking sphere to every aspect of human interaction; the process by which the term "humanity" receives a concrete reality.

Point Omega: the final convergent point of the universe wherein is achieved the consummation of the world; the Universal-Christ.

Socialization: the association of free and individualized units by means of psychic interaction.

Ultra-human: that stage of human evolution following our own, characterized by greater socialization and communal activity.

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Vita Auctoris

Jerome Perlinski was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 7 August 1940. After attending elementary and secondary schools in Chicago, he entered the School of Arts and Sciences of Saint Louis University in September 1959. He graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in History in July 1962. In the same year, he completed philosophical studies at the Fusz Memorial School of Philosophy, Saint Louis University. In 1962-1963, he was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow and a Ford Honors' Master's Fellow in the graduate school of Saint Louis University, where he received his Master of Arts degree in Modern European History with a thesis on "Lenin and the Russification of Marxism," under the direction of Dr. Thomas P. Neill.

From 1963-1965 he continued studies in the graduate school of Saint Louis University in the History of Ideas, as well as at the Saint John School of Theology in Theology.

In 1965-1966 he served as instructor on the faculties of Saint Louis University, Maryville College of the Sacred Heart, Marillac College, and Florissant Valley Community College--all in the Saint Louis area, as well as on the faculty of College of the Holy Names, Oakland, California.

In 1966-1967, he was named first Fellow of the Fondation Teilhard de Chardin, Paris, France, and spent a complete year there in dissertation research.

At present, he is instructor in history and theology at Webster College, Webster Groves, Missouri.